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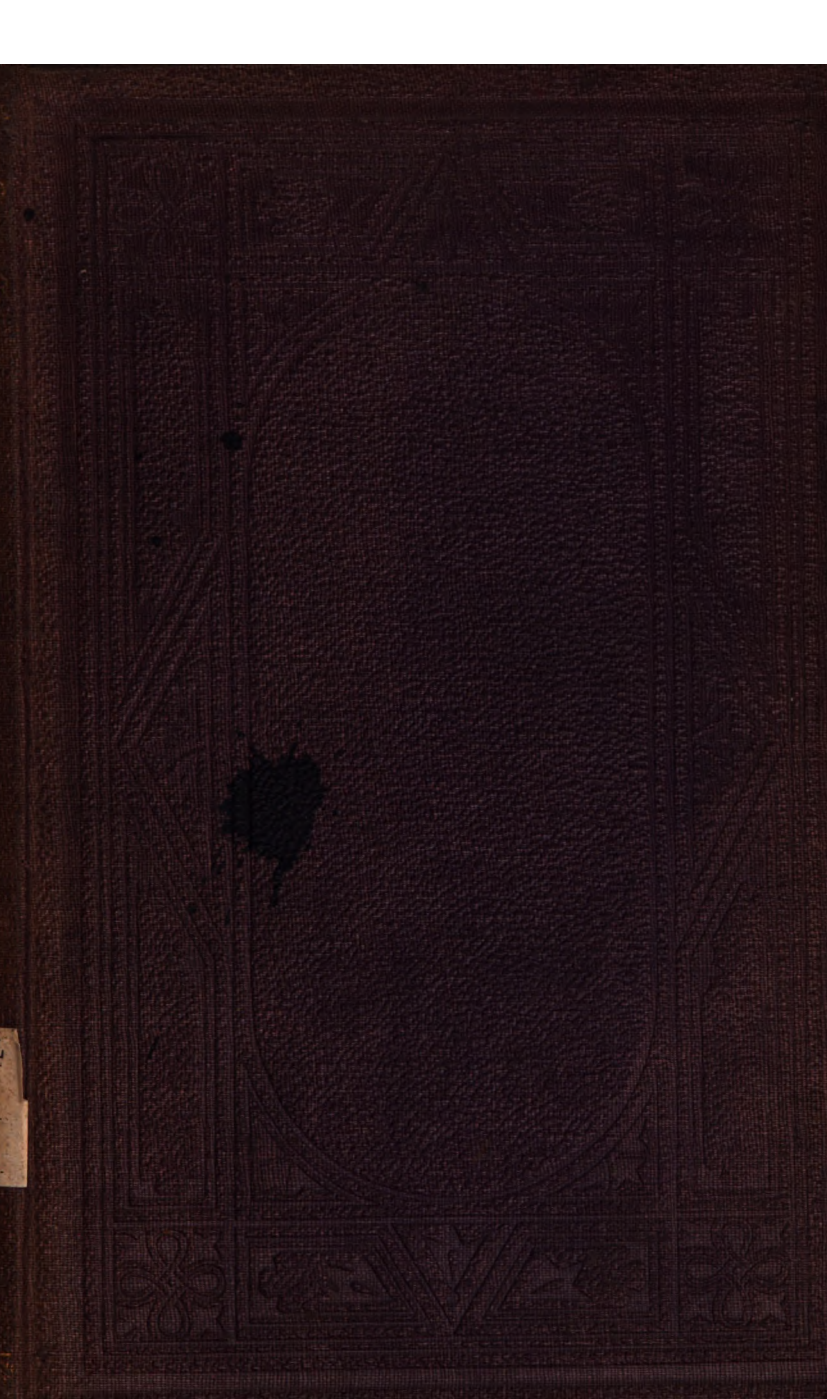
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## ABBOTSFORD AND SIR WALTER SCOTT.

*Athenæum, July 9th, 1853.*

"The lovers of Scott, and those who treasure up traits and anecdotes of that kindly genius, can once again read concerning the scenery of 'the Monastery,' and the 'romance in stone and lime,' which the 'Great Unknown' created in Tweed-side."

*John Bull, August 9, 1853.*

"The style is unaffected, the matter is neatly brought together and arranged, and the impression produced is that of a subject treated by one who knows it well, and to whom the treatment has been a 'labour of love'—and not a task."

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*Belfast Mercury, August 22, 1853.*

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*Nottingham Guardian, September 22, 1853.*

"This book will become a stock-addition to our light literature."

*Leamington Spa Courier, Oct. 8, 1853.*

"This work is very cleverly written and is not unworthy of holding a leading rank among the countless publications having reference to the biography or genius of the author of Waverley."

*Manchester Weekly Advertiser.*

"This is a very pleasant gossiping volume, abounding with anecdotes of the once 'Great Unknown,' and descriptions of his haunts, habits, manners, &c., which must be deeply interesting to all who are acquainted with his writings,—a class almost co-extensive, we fancy, with the whole reading community."

*Leicester New Monthly Magazine, page 185, vol. I.*

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---

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ABBOTSFORD

AND

SIR WALTER SCOTT.



# ABBOTSFORD

AND

## SIR WALTER SCOTT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

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1854.

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TO JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, Esq.

THESE FEW ADDITIONAL FLOWERS,

(STREWN AT THE FOOT OF

THE IMPERISHABLE MONUMENT

HE HAS ERECTED

TO THE MEMORY OF

SCOTLAND'S GREATEST GENIUS.)

ARE HUMBLY OFFERED

BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

---

SINCE the last edition of this little volume went through the press, I have made another pilgrimage to classic Abbotsford, which has furnished me with much additional matter for the present new edition. Besides giving a more elaborate description of the home of the Mighty Minstrel, I have also added to my anecdotes a few others which, I doubt not, will be equally as interesting as the preceding ones, and find as much favour in the eyes of my readers and indulgent critics, as they have done. I feel deeply indebted to the Press, not only for the favourable opinions given of my little work, but also for quoting so many of these trifling anecdotes, and which

I doubt not has been the means of largely increasing the sale of the book, and hastening the call for a new edition.

To my numerous readers I can only say that as the earlier sketches of artists are valued by those who possess their more mature and perfect works, so I hope they will give the present more perfect and larger edition a place on their shelves beside the first. Further, I think that every additional anecdote which throws a light on so eminent a character as the author of "Marmion" and "Old Mortality" will be gladly received by the reading public. Nor do I now promise that my task is entirely at an end, for as every little fact that throws any new light on the character of Shakspeare is received with gratitude and gladness, so do I believe it will ever be regarding the illustrious author of Waverley, for the two geniuses resemble each other so far that there cannot be found in the works of any other writers so

great a variety of character, so grand a gallery of life-like portraits. What Shakspeare did for the manners and customs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Sir Walter Scott has done equally well for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to say nothing of the more remote creations, in which they both carry us into the far past, and bring the mighty dead before our inward eye.

He has also made us familiar with the "huts where poor men lie," and shown that the sun shines upon as much virtue and honour when it gilds the roof of the lowly cottage as when it flashes upon the pillared front of the sumptuous palace, whose inhabitants are "clothed in purple and fine linen," for no man ever mingled more with the high and the humble than Sir Walter Scott, or estimated more fairly the character of the two classes than he did. Knowing this, I have endeavoured to give a nearer view of the living

man, to narrate more minutely his every-day habits, such as he was when he walked forth in all his simple great-heartedness, and laughed and chatted with his homely neighbours. In conclusion, I feel I can honestly add, that although my pen lacks the power of his far-famed Biographer, Lockhart, no one ever idolized Sir Walter Scott more than I did while living, nor reveres his name more deeply than I do, now that he is dead.

*Hawthorndale, 1854.*

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

---

THIS little work derives its origin through conversing with the venerable Author of "The Pleasures of Memory," while sharing his hospitality, and to whom I then chanced to mention that during the period I was honoured with the notice of Sir Walter Scott, I had been accustomed to make notes of whatever transpired either in my own hearing and presence, or was otherwise gathered from those who had easy access to Abbotsford.

To this Mr. Rogers replied, that such a work could not fail of being interesting to all the admirers of the Author of Waverley, and not least to himself, who had been on intimate terms with Sir Walter Scott: kindly adding, "What would not the world give to know a tithe of the interesting anecdotes you have collected about Sir Walter Scott, if the same related to Shakspeare? There is nothing insignificant or worthless connected with the memories of such great men." This was after Mr. Rogers had heard me read a portion of my manuscript.

While these sheets have been passing through the



press, I have again re-visited the neighbourhood of Abbotsford, and find but little that I need wish to alter in the descriptions of the scenery. What has struck me as requiring a few explanations, I have thrown together as a diary in the last chapter of my little volume, which, should it be fortunate enough to reach a future edition, I shall place in a more becoming form, in the body of the work. (This is now done in the present edition).

I do not think that what I have had to say about the immortal Author of Waverley, will be at all less interesting through having kept the materials by me so many years, for though on re-reading the sheets, I find one or two trifling mistakes (all of which are now corrected), yet I dare not shelter myself under the too common excuse that it is an over hasty production. It is a poor work that will not explain itself, and I trust a glance at the table of Contents will, like many another well-spread table, tempt the guests to sit down to the feast, and be as pleased as when in his company they saw, "Hawthorndale Village Revisited."

HAWTHORNDALE VILLAGER.

*Hawthorndale, 1852.*

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## ABBOTSFORD AND SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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### CHAPTER I.

"Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,  
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,  
And told our marvelling boyhood legends' store,  
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,  
How are they blotted from the things that be!"

LADY OF THE LAKE.

MEMORY hallows the resting-places of the dead; and when revisited we again conjure up their forms, drawing them as it were, back from death; we seem to catch the very tones of their voice in the low wind, and to see their faces reflected in the chiding stream, which murmurs on as it did in the days of old, when they and we sat on its banks conversing together,—to live over again long by-gone years in the brief space of a few minutes, by calling up the past, and forgetting how wide a gulph separates it from the present. Memory peoples the surrounding scenery; and over the landscape that

still remains the same, those who have departed again seem to move; in every hill and dale, field and valley, the "mind's eye" finds some familiar form who traversed with us those well-remembered spots, and with pleasant talk beguiled the way. And amid the thousand phantoms which thus dance before the eyes of the imagination, some giant form stands out, absorbing all around into itself, or dwarfing every other creation of fancy.

Such were my feelings, and such were my thoughts, when last I revisited the neighbourhood of Abbotsford, and remembered that, but a few brief years before, I had there stood face to face with Sir Walter Scott, and traversed every moor and mountain which surrounds the neighbourhood of the home he so proudly owned, and which he has rendered immortal by the magical power of his pen. The hills beyond the Tweed, grey with their old eternal summits, rose up before me, beyond these the Cowdenknowes, renowned in song; Gala water and the braes of Yarrow, teeming with the associations of old heart-stirring poetry, that go sounding through the soul—the Vale of Ettrick, that stood dimly revealed, and shot its stream like a silver thread along the border of the landscape—Melrose Abbey, solemn in its

ruins—the Rhymer’s glen, haunted with fairy legends, and the distant Eildon hills, teeming with old out-of-the-world traditions of witchery, and

“Bogles who catch us unaware;”

all these burst again upon me with a sad delight,—sad, because he who had lighted up the landscape with the forms of Beauty and Love, was now no more. While thus gazing, Memory reverted to the past, to my schooldays, and the years spent at Galashiels—the old inhabitants, many of them the originals who have figured in the works of the great Magician, where they will remain enshrined throughout all Time in his immortal pages.

I recalled his conversation, which was the delight and admiration of all who heard it—remembered many of the subjects he loved to dilate upon, and the inimitable tact with which he adapted whatever he said to the tastes of those he addressed.

Many of the anecdotes, of which he had a never-ending succession, came to my mind, and I regretted that I had not preserved more of that familiar conversation which he poured forth with such rapid utterance. I seemed again to hear that voice, so rich, so varied, that

at one moment kindled the soul like the martial sound of a trumpet, then sank into the heart like the dying notes of some plaintive air that calls up the long-hidden tears. That never-to-be-forgotten countenance appeared again to arise before me with all its play of light and shade, where any one might almost read the thought before it found expression in the working of the lips, or the grave or gay changing of the deep-set eyes. I recalled his stalwarth figure, as he stood leaning on his staff, overlooking our boyish games; his deep merry laugh, that, like the bark of his favourite hound Maida, seemed to awaken the very hills; and his encouraging words when we had accomplished some boyish achievement as he called out, "Weel done, weel done, my little heroes!" for we all felt, even then, that only to hurl a stone, or kick a football beyond our compeers, and be rewarded by the praise of Sir Walter Scott, was indeed glory; for there was something in his manner more winning than in that of any other man I ever knew, something that made me even then feel the words of the old poet who says—

"For when linked to the great in name  
We seem partakers of their fame." 41



But before proceeding any further I will give a brief statement of the unforeseen incident which brought me under the notice of the Author of *Waverley*, and in as short a manner as possible tell my "plain unvarnished tale." I had, along with others of my schoolfellows been bird-nesting in the Abbotsford plantations, as was our custom, and in one of the rural arbours which form pleasant resting-places beside the Tweed, I chanced to leave a small pocket-book in which I kept my fishing-tackle, fly-hooks, and "stray thoughts," and other boyish treasures—a strange mixture, yet no unapt representative of the mind of its youthful owner. This book the worthy Baronet found, and in it the name of the trespasser, together with that of the school to which I belonged.

On the following afternoon Sir Walter entered the school, and seated himself by the Master's desk, where they had a little private conversation together, and I was, after a few moments' space, summoned aloud by name, and ordered to step forward. With the remembrance of the previous day's trespass painfully fresh in my memory, I moved along with reluctant step, fully expecting one hundred lines of Virgil would be the slightest punishment inflicted, and well knowing that such

a task would keep me awake half the night if I were to be so punished for my misdemeanour.

Sir Walter, with his usual penetration, seemed to read my fears at a glance, but instead of reprimanding me, inquired in his blindest manner if the book he held in his hand was mine. I acknowledged it was. He then inquired whether the verses (which I give below, entitled, "My Dearie"\*) were of my writing. To this I also pleaded guilty; and then the murder was out. The praise or blame bestowed upon me, and the present he made me, must remain

'A tale untold.'

Suffice it, that the fine spirit of charity which gave such a charm to his character, causing him to

"Find good in every thing,"

he extended to me, and from that hour I was

\* MY DEARIE.

Oft by the bonny banks of Tweed,  
I've gathered gowans frae the mead,  
Whilst in my thoughts sae oft I read,  
My Dearie.

Although, my love, we're doomed to part,  
I bear thine image in my heart,  
Nor can it e'er from thee depart,  
My Dearie.

free to wander over Abbotsford and the surrounding neighbourhood, wherever and whenever I pleased—and the great author never afterwards passed me without exchanging a friendly word and a kind look, and from that time I began to chronicle all that interested me about Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott, and which I have now thrown into the present form in the following light gossiping pages.

When I say these are light gossiping pages, let it be understood that they are written from notes taken on the spot twenty-five years ago, and that I so choose to designate them, lest it

From Galashiels where'er I stray,  
By Fairy Dean or nameless brae,  
My thoughts to thee will wing their way,  
My Dearie.

Down Huntly burn, by Eildon tree,  
The Rhymer's throne of minstrelsy,  
Thy flitting shadow still I see,  
My Dearie.

By Allan brae or Gala stream,  
Where'er I go, of thee I dream,  
For thou art still my constant theme,  
My Dearie.

One word I wished to hear thee speak,  
And as the blush stole o'er thy cheek  
So hoped it timidly would break,  
My Dearie.

should be expected that I shall adhere to the regular order which is so necessary to Biography. I have here given the impression he made on me when a youth, but arranged the matter with matured ideas, mellowed, so to speak, through having been so long preserved, and thus enabling me to look upon his character, as I should now have looked upon it: for had I written out this work at that remote time, it would not have contained the remarks and comparisons which can only be gained by mingling amongst our fellow men:—for, by contrasting him with others whom I have known, I arrived at a knowledge of his immeasurable superiority.

There was something in his manner of telling an anecdote, or narrating any little common incident of the day, unlike that of any other person I ever heard. He had a way of his own of colouring things, of bringing the object before the eye like a picture, by adding some little touch here

That word was "Love"—but though the name  
Upon thy looks oft went and came,  
To speak it set thy cheek on flame,  
My Dearie.

Oft in the twilight when alone  
I've breathed thy name in fearful tone  
And stooped to pick a fairy stone,  
My Dearie.

and there of costume, countenance, or character, that gave a peculiar originality to his conversational powers, more racy, I have often thought, than in his written descriptions.

Within doors, or without, if he sat down he was never idle ; in his study, while talking, he would keep on arranging or destroying useless papers ; if he threw himself on a bank, or among his native heather, his eye would either wander to the passing clouds, or pursue some insect so long as it remained in sight, or plucking the nearest flower, pull it to pieces, and examine every portion ; or he would mutter some old world rhyme, as if his thoughts were far away. But the greatest treat of all, was to stand beside him on some eminence that commanded an extensive view of the surrounding country, for, far as the eye could reach, every foot of ground was as familiar to him as the entrance to his own domain. Pointing with his staff, he would show the road by which the

Oft peeping through the shadows green  
Lest the White Lady should be seen  
That haunts the glen of Fairy Dean,  
My Dearie.

Illusive as a dream may be,  
Still pleasure it affords to me  
In thought to be once more with thee,  
My Dearie.

old Moss Troopers passed ; the very spot where they were overtaken with their booty ; where the struggle took place between the contending parties, and where the chief of the clan fell ;—direct our eyes to some ruin, and re-people it with his picturesque language ; until in fancy we saw the banner again waving from the keep ; the baron and his train in glittering armour crossing the drawbridge, and vanishing under the low-browed archway. Or, if only a few stones were left, the mouldering remains of some monastery, at his bidding abbot and prior again appeared, the matin bell rang upon the fancy, and down the long aisle in cope and stole arrayed, with the crucifix borne before, and the perfumed censers swinging ; the whole array of ghostly fathers seemed to pass by : and when he ceased speaking, you marvelled at the power which could thus carry you to the past, and cheat you out of the remembrance of the present.

Delightful as it is to read one of his own picturesque pages, descriptive of a border-fray, yet it bears no comparison to his description of the same scene on the spot. The change of countenance, the rising and falling of the voice, the lighting up of his eye as he poured forth in rapid succession the struggles and combats,

hand to hand, before the field was won, seemed to make you somehow a spectator of the fight, and you could almost believe that the battle had been fought under his own eyes. He would describe the very armour the heroes wore, the devices on their shields, their war-cry, the narrow escape of one, the death-blow dealt by another ; how a third dashed across the stream ; a fourth fell under his war-horse ; how this hero was swarthy, and that fair. Then the very weather was brought into the picture, early dawn, and misty day-break ; the field slippery through the rain that fell overnight, or the heat of the sun that rendered the armour of the combatants oppressive ; and all this with his foot planted on the battle-field, perhaps over the remains of the heroes whose deeds he had again brought forward by the broad daylight of his imagination was a scene never to be forgotten ; a delight worth living for, a pleasure which memory carries to the very gate of the grave. I have often thought what a renowned commander he would have been ; how he would have distinguished himself in the army, had it been his lot to have become a soldier ; Wellington himself would not have been half so eloquent, nor able to have shown so many reasons for losing a battle, as Sir Walter ;



for in detailing one of these ancient frays, he never failed to point out the advantage, or disadvantage, of the position taken up; to show how bad this ground was for cavalry, and how much might have been gained had they charged along this spot or over that;—pointing out each as he continued his vivid descriptions, and looking like one born to give the word of command.

The braes of Yarrow and Ettrick, Bowden and Boldside, are all associated with the writings of Sir Walter, without whose works no bookcase can be said to be complete, for next to Shakspeare, the Waverley Novels take their place, and it is in them, and the Dramas of the immortal Bard of Avon, that the greatest variety of life-like characters are to be found. In reading these matchless Novels, all have felt that charm and superiority of intellect which winds deep into the affections, and have caught, to a certain degree, the amiability of feeling which lesser writers often try in vain to instil. Genius makes many enemies, but it also wins many sure friends, who, for the sake of the divinity enshrined within, forgive much, endure long, and exact little, partaking of the character of disciples as well as friends; and towards no other person could this be more conspicuously

shown than to Sir Walter Scott; in whom every human virtue was concentrated; before whom Envy vanished, and Slander's voice was hushed; whose heart, like his countenance, was manly, open, and sincere. He drew from the human heart a strong desire to look upwards, a reverential inclination; for there seemed to float around him an atmosphere of religion, of loyalty; and you could not refrain from offering up to him that worship which was rendered to the great of old, feeling that it is a divine pleasure to root ourselves by what we love to contemplate, and to grow beside, as it were, and become a humble portion of a greater and better life, though but a dew-drop which their mighty and overhanging shadows protected. When a great man who has engrossed our thoughts, or won our homage, dies, a gap seems left in the world,—a wheel in the great machine of our existence suddenly stands still; for how many pure, high, generous sentiments which we can never know, have died with him? It is this love, so rare, so exhaustless, that sanctifies genius, and Sir Walter would have been loved for his amiability and kind-heartedness alone, if he had never distinguished himself in literature. I cannot describe that low sad sinking of the heart I felt on again wandering over the

neighbourhood of Abbotsford when Death had broken the enchanter's wand,—had called away the mighty Magician from among us. It was after an absence of several years that I revisited the places immortalized by his pen ; not a spot but recalled to mind where I had seen him, in years gone by ; his very looks and the tone of his voice, as he had stood before me while he spoke. He had a kind word for all, even down to the dumb animals which followed him wherever he went, the numerous train of dogs which by their loud barking, like so many heralds, announced his coming or going forth ; even the very fowls that followed him made a cackling noise, and the pigs seemed to express their uneasiness at his departure by a mournful grunt as they hurried after him ; the cattle lowed, as if delighted by his notice. And above all, he had an abhorrence to destroy whatever he had bred or fed, and of which no persuasion could induce him to partake ; for what he loved or noticed he cherished with a childish affection. In almost any other man, such a tender regard for dumb animals would have awakened a feeling of contempt, while in Sir Walter it seemed to strengthen our love and reverence, and to make him appear beyond the

“Mould of common clay.”

Often have I seen the "Sherra" go pat some half-starved stray animal which had been turned loose upon the road-side to feed, and pitying the poor beast's condition, he would hasten on from cottage to cottage until he found the owner, to whom he would read as severe a lecture, as his kind heart would permit him to utter, for the ill-treatment the poor animal had received.

Neither beast, bird, nor insect escaped his observation, and I often regret he has not left us some work on Natural History, for the pen, that adorned every subject it touched, would have produced something very different from the dry details and matter-of-fact hard style in which such works are generally written; for to such a work he would have brought all the powers of close observation that belonged to Gilbert White, with that love of Nature which reigned in the peaceful heart of honest Izaak Walton, and thrown over all, what neither of the above pleasing writers possessed—his own picturesque word-painting and poetical prose.

## CHAPTER II.

### ABBOTSFORD.

ABBOTSFORD was nearly completed when I first attracted the attention of Sir Walter Scott ; and the plantations in which he took so much pride, even then, formed a rich shelter for both game and cattle, the latter of which greatly improved the land. What afterwards rose into such a majestic pile of building, was, I understand, originally only a picturesque cottage covered with evergreens, what Keats has poetically called a—

“ Green nestling spot for poets made ;”

and well would it have been for the peace of mind of him, at whose bidding the great fabric arose, if his wishes had been circumscribed within that rural bower ; if he had been contented to have built himself a name in his immortal works, instead of in a pile of stone and mortar.

Sir Walter was an unequalled agriculturist,

and in planting stood second to none; had he devoted his whole time to his estate, and never taken up his pen, the perfection to which he brought a tract of wild moorland, and a few turnip-fields, would have been considered wonderful. It is true he had a fine eye for the picturesque, and when he selected, for the site, a spot with the silver Tweed running before, and a range of hills rising behind, with little dells dipping down everywhere, he knew what Nature had done for him beforehand; that the beautiful form stood there, and he had only to throw around it a more fanciful attire. Not contented with planting his woods only, as a common arboriculturist would have been, and leaving them to grow undisturbed, he cut through them bridle-paths and footpaths, mazes which went wandering everywhere,—where one might lose one's self for hours together, and at every turning discover some new beauty; at every opening some object more picturesque. Here and there waterfalls were ever calling to one another, and wild birds rising from the silent lakes, while deep in the plantation the stockdove—

“Brooded o'er its own sweet voice.”

The principal approach to the building was

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by an arched gateway, that opened in an embattled wall; in which was placed the "jougs," consisting of a short chain of three links with two pieces of bowed iron working on a rivet so as to open and shut, and large enough to be placed around a man's neck; they had also an eye at the end to admit of a padlock to fasten them when on; these hung on the left hand side just under the bell, dark and grim in their aged rust, and, from their singular appearance, at once attracted the notice of a stranger. Of these ancient instruments of punishment, Sir Walter gives the following account. "The jougs, those old emblems of feudal authority, came from the great citadel of the Douglasses, Thrieve Castle, in Galloway."

At the little village of Duddingstone, about two miles from Edinburgh, "jougs" are still hanging fastened on the left hand side of the outer church gates. They were originally put round the necks of those persons who had become fathers without the license of mother church, and who wickedly and unlawfully

"Propagated God's image through the land."

This punishment always took place on the Sunday morning, so that the godless delinquent might be exposed to, and scoffed at, by the more godly congregation. In some places

a three-legged stool, called the "cutty-stool," was used instead of the "jougs," and was placed in the middle of the church, where the offender stood during the morning service dressed in a white gown, doing penance for his misdeeds.

Inside, you found yourself in a pleasant poetical walk, overshadowed in summer-time with the sweetest of roses, and the most odoriferous woodbines, amid which there was ever a deep drowsy murmuring of bees, and a kind of pleasing green twilight, even in the noon-day of rosy June. On the east side, facing the morning sun, a beautiful row of Gothic arches opened, filled with invisible network, through which you caught glimpses of ornamental flower-beds, statues and urns, and all kinds of harmonious ornaments, of turrets and open porches, which seemed to open upon, and lead into endless avenues of rosaries, and fir-trees ascending height above height; the birch and hazel overtopped by tall elms and broad-branching oaks, which made the beautiful gardens look as if they were hemmed in by forests, and you would scarcely have been surprised to have seen Nymph or Satyr step out from the thicket, and tread a measure on the green velvet turf.

The building itself was just what might be



expected to spring from the rich imagination of the poet, bearing resemblance to everything ancient and beautiful, yet no perfect copy of any known building. At each end of the frontage rose a tall tower, the one not a bit like the other; in fact the whole of the frontage was so indented and decorated, so hung with gables and eaves and parapets, and water-spouts, that you laughed to see the droll faces looking down upon you, and in very despair gave up the hopeless task of attempting to describe what was indescribable; you felt satisfied with the strange pleasing effect produced by the whole, and cared not to enumerate the Elizabethan chimneys, quaint heraldic deep-dyed windows, with all the thousand ornamental carvings that run one into the other, until they bewildered the gaze, like the intricate decorations of the palace roofs of the Alhambra. Horns of enormous stags, whose living likenesses no longer roam over the earth, and which had been dug out of bogs and fens, that in ancient times were covered with forests, threw their petrified branches over the porches, and gave a fine baronial look to the whole.

The entrance to the hall was imposing, and when once inside you felt that the hand of a

great master had been there; that only a master-mind could have called into existence such a place of beauty. The two lofty windows were filled with armorial bearings, deep-dyed as the wings of the tiger-moth, rich heraldries that, as Keats says, "blushed with blood of Queens and Kings," and giving that solemn cathedral-like look to the building, which fills the mind with grave associations, and sends memory dreaming along the shores of by-gone years. In length it measured about forty feet, the height and breadth nearly corresponding, being about half that of the length, though looking somewhat loftier through the series of pointed arches which formed the roof, from the centre of which hung a series of emblazoned shields, the same also running round the cornice. Amid these the bloody heart of the Douglas and Scotland's Royal Lion were conspicuous; the Pringles, Homes, Elliotts, Herries, Rutherfords, together with the bold Buccleuch, and I know not how many others, all renowned in Border History, whose ancestors were in ancient days famous robbers, and who had driven many a fat herd from the rich pasture-lands of England; a country which they felt it their first duty to fight and plunder; all these escutcheons hung there above the

head of him who has given an immortality to their names, and made even their vices look virtuous. While underneath was the following inscription in black letter,—

“These be ye coat armories of ye Clannis and Chiefe Men of name whae keepit the marches of Scotlande in ye aulde time for ye kinge. Trewe were they in their tyme, and in their defence God them defendit.”

Around this majestic hall run dark panels of oak beautifully carved, which had been brought from the ancient Abbey of Dunfermline, and which covered and gave a fine antique finish to the walls. Over the door at the eastern end of the hall were placed the escutcheons of his friends Morritt, Erskine, and Rose. The floor was paved with marble brought from the quarries of the stormy Hebrides, which was placed in the form of lozenges, in alternate black and white, all in admirable keeping with the rest of the building. Suits of splendid armour hung around, helmet and plume, pennon and shield, cuirasses of the richest wrought mail, spears, swords, and daggers, claymores that had cloven many a skull; remains of chivalry and implements of modern warfare; trophies of old battle-fields and relics of Waterloo; and all of which Sir Walter Scott was familiar with,

could tell the story attached to each, and give them a value that they never could have had, in any one else's possession. One was a splendid suit of English armour of the time of Henry the Fifth, and when you looked at it, you ceased to wonder so few were slain in the old wars, so well cased as the warriors were in steel and iron; another, a gorgeous suit of chain mail, had once been worn by one of Tippoo Saib's body guard from whom it was taken after he fell, fighting bravely for his master at the siege of Seringapatam.

Quitting the magnificent hall you entered another vaulted apartment, which run cross-wise along the whole breadth of the building, having also a window of deep emblazoning at each end—and here again you came upon all sorts of knick-knacks which had been used in war or the chase, Rob Roy's gun with his initials R. M. C. standing for Robert Magregor Campbell, and which are engraven on a small square silver plate inlaid in the stock; Hofer's blunderbuss, and the splendid sword which Charles the First presented to Montrose; King James's hunting bottle, mingled with instruments of torture and sylvan trophies, thumb-screws, and stag's horns, all so neatly arranged and placed in such admirable order, that when

the eye had once familiarized itself with the multitude of objects, they became as easy to read as a printed page of history, so harmoniously had he blended the past with the present. There also were the pistols taken out of Napoleon's carriage when he retreated from Waterloo.

You next came to the dining parlour, a beautiful room, having the old feudal dais which was hung over with pictures and decorated with ornaments copied from Melrose Abbey, while the walls, which were partially covered with crimson, had a rich, warm, sunny, comfortable look ; just such a one as you can fancy an old baron, wearied with hunting and hawking, might have selected for his afternoon's nap, in his great oaken chair, and with his stag-hounds reposing at his feet. The roof is of dark oak, richly carved, and the room, beside a spacious bow window, contains niches for lamps, and all sorts of Gothic recesses, accurately copied from portions of Ancient Melrose. In the room hung portraits of the far-famed General Lord Essex on horseback, the Duke of Monmouth, Gay, and Prior, by Jervis, Lucy Walters, and some Duchess of Buccleuch, who was connected in some way with Monmouth ; but I have forgotten the story Sir Walter

attached to this portrait, as also the names of several other portraits, one I think of Hogarth, and a ghastly head of Mary Queen of Scots, said to have been painted the day after her execution; to this was also appended one of his old-world legends. And among several family pictures one of Sir Walter's Great Grandfather, called Old Beardie through having allowed his beard to grow after the execution of Charles I.

Narrow passages, such as are found in old Monasteries, run about the building in every direction, and in every corner of which you found something belonging to the past that carried memory back to the days of other years.

But of all the rooms in Abbotsford none pleased me more than the snug social breakfast apartment, which looked over the Tweed, and commanded views of the poetical Yarrow and romantic Ettrick, scenes which live in many an old border-ballad, but which were left for him, to crown with an immortality of unfading garlands; to give to every stream, hill, and valley

"A local habitation and a name."

second only to that which Shakspeare has thrown around the haunts which his pen has hallowed.

This room was rendered cheerful through the beautiful rows of books, and engravings, and water-colour drawings it contained ; books to which all had access who pleased to take them down. Here hung an oil-painting, I forget by whom, beautifully executed, and representing one of the scenes in the *Bride of Lammermoor*. Several of Turner's exquisite drawings also adorned the walls, together with paintings by Thompson, of Duddingstone, and those elegant drawings which were made from the "*Provincial Antiquities of Scotland*," a work which it is ever to be regretted was never completed. Nor must I forget the pleasant society of Lady Scott ; the liveliness of the beautiful Sophia ; Anne, whose knowledge, like deep waters, ran still ; Walter, who afterwards went into the army ; and Charles, who was then a youth, and all of whom treated me with an affectionate kindness. Speaking of the breakfast room reminds me that one of Sir Walter's breakfasts was not a thing to be forgotten, it was something more than a mere bread - and - butter matter ; and those who followed the great Minstrel's example were pretty well provisioned until dinner-time. There are two men, and both poets, whose breakfast tables I can never forget for their sakes, to say nothing of the

good cheer displayed ; the one my early patron, Sir Walter Scott ; and the other Samuel Rogers, Esq., whose praise and encouragement have been chiefly instrumental in my producing the present pages, for as he kindly said to me, " Everything connected with the memory of so great and so good a man ought to be preserved."

But to return to my description of Abbotsford, after quitting the breakfast parlour, in which, by the way stood the beautiful bust of Mackenzie, you passed out into a corridor before which an old fountain—

"Shook its loosened silver in the sun."

This fountain formerly stood by the ancient cross in Edinburgh, and had for centuries flowed with wine at the Coronations of Scotland's Kings, and as it made a pleasant murmur on the ear, memory wandered back unconsciously to those stormy old times. It was made of freestone, and measured about a yard in diameter, and harmonized admirably with the solemn-looking greenhouse by which it stood. Sir Walter loved to talk about the " mirth, and feast, and revelry" which had been celebrated around this relic of ancient times ; it was to him an old volume lettered over with sweet and solemn associations ; a portion of the past, which he



so much loved to dwell upon. Passing by the elegantly furnished drawing-room, with its splendid portrait of Dryden (painted by Sir Peter Lely, and which is supposed to be the best likeness of the poet in his old age extant), you entered the library of Abbotsford, the largest room in the whole building, and measuring some fifty feet in length, by thirty wide. It had in the centre a grand projecting bow window. But to describe this would be to give a catalogue almost like that of the British Museum, and much it is to be regretted that no such catalogue was ever published of the valuable works the author of *Waverley* had collected together; it would have been as interesting to future ages as a catalogue of Shakspeare's library would be to us. This grand Library contained at one time between twenty and thirty thousand volumes, and amongst them presentation copies from almost every living author from every quarter of the globe.

Sir Walter displayed great taste in his bindings, not in that tawdry gaudiness which was then too much the fashion, but in a style that may almost be said to be his own, in which he endeavoured to make the binding emblematical of the book. He was rather proud, and well he might be, of his fine tall folio

Montfaucon in fifteen volumes, which was the gift of George the Fourth, and was emblazoned with the royal arms. Never, perhaps, was there such a collection of diablerie in any library, as he had gathered together, containing every story of witchcraft, from the witch of Endor to the last broadside in which some unfortunate old woman had been burnt to death, through living neighbour to a diseased cow. That his own mind was a little tinged with these grey old superstitions, we have his own confession in many of his works, in addition to that given in his "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," in which he fancied one night that he saw the figure of Byron in the arched doorway, beside the library. Besides this mountainous collection of magic, and every imaginable devilry, he had a splendid pile of printed works and manuscripts connected with the last Scottish insurrection, and there is no doubt that from pondering over these rare materials, he built up his matchless novel of *Waverley*. A bust of Shakspeare, copied from the monumental effigy of the immortal Bard at Stratford-upon-Avon, the face of which is all but proved to have been a cast of the great Poet's features after death, was the only bust the library contained. Another object of great

interest was the silver urn, filled with bones which had been gathered from the ancient sepulchres of Athens. I never heard Sir Walter what is expressively called "downright angry," excepting at the loss of Byron's letter, which he had placed in the vase along with the bones. He knew some one had stolen it, and he could not, at times, help anathematizing the thief, in a style that would have done honour to Tristram Shandy.

Facing the sunny south, was the author's little study, the holiest ground in the whole of this rich and picturesque pile, the privileged place which only the chosen few were permitted to enter, the great chamber of imagination, in which he produced his undying works. This study contained but little furniture; a desk, since pretty well known through the engraving of it, wherein the original MS. of Waverley was found by Sir Walter, after having laid there for some years, together with a leather-covered chair, and only one other for the lady or gentleman he "delighted to honour," telling that this *sanctum* was no lazy lounge, no idle gossip shop. A gallery run round which gave easy access to the few select books that were placed for reference, and had a light iron-rail tracery in front, while in the right hand corner, a door

opened to his chamber, so that he could at any time, unobserved, enter his study; this door also led to one of the towers by a private staircase, from which, while he has been writing, I have often stood and gazed over the surrounding scenery, he meantime busied below giving to it a proud immortality. This study also contained a few weapons either used in war or the chase, together with a head of Claverhouse and a portrait of Rob Roy. I can never forget the thrill of delight I felt when first invited into this hallowed retreat, something similar I have only once experienced since, and that was when Samuel Rogers, Esq.,—the only one left out of all these “mighty sons of song”—and may he live long—seated me in the chair in which Campbell, Shelly, Byron, Scott, Wordsworth, and every illustrious literary character of the last half century, have been seated. Peace to their memories; many of them have long since met, if all be true which Milton says, that—

“ All the Muses in a ring,  
Round about Jove’s altar sing.”

## CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLY SITS AS  
JUDGE.

IN nothing was the natural kindness of the Author of Waverley more fully displayed, than in the interest he took in whatever was going on around him. The school-boy idling beside the river, the "auld wife" running hurriedly outside the door of her cottage, the humble labourer returning home in the evening sunset, with the mattock on his shoulder, were all objects of interest to him, not merely to gossip away a vagrant hour with, but as something he took a deep concern in; for there was scarcely a face around the whole of his ample neighbourhood, but what he was familiar with. He had always a joke ready for the wag, a sage remark for the staid and aged, a word of comfort for the infirm and poor, of consolation for the sorrowful—and even to the very young and the youth of the neighbourhood, something to say

which they remembered with pleasure in after days.

Although the inhabitants of the village and the town of Galashiels, since renowned as the famous Gandercleuch, were upon friendly terms, yet no sooner was the snow upon the ground, than their annual feuds were renewed ; and we again met upon the Bow Butts brae ; each party anxious to come off victorious in the ancient combat of snow balling. Beside the game, we had other contests, in which school was pitted against school, and street against street ; they were the safety-valves, out of which our young animal spirits found vent ; to conquer has ever been the pride of man ; it has made heroes in other things beside battles, and laid the foundation of many a worthy ambition. It was, as Sir Walter has said, "not a feeling of ill-will towards each other, but a rough mode of play." We only good-naturedly tried our strength, with no more feeling of malice than is exhibited amongst playful dogs who try to overturn each other, although they exchange an occasional bite. To a looker-on it would have afforded amusement, only to have seen how few amongst us were idle ; even our younger companions in arms, though they lacked the sinew and muscle to hurl a stone aright, and

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make it fall bang upon the heads of our opponents, yet they were useful accessories in our camp; they were the feeders of strife, the providers of balls, the kneaders of hard knocks, the suppliers of moving thumps, which they brought in a dormant state in their little pinafores, and poured white and harmless at our feet, leaving us to forward them with care, and deliver them with all possible speed; so easily does even innocence become an instrument in the hands of strife. Many, beyond a doubt, employed in those death-casting foundries, help to form the murderous balls with no more thought of their intended mission than if they themselves had but made them to be tossed from hand to hand, for a summer's evening amusement upon the village green.

Not that ours was a battle which always terminated without blows; for we had those amongst us, who to give the ball an unerring aim, and when it did fall, to prevent mistakes, were too apt to enclose a suspicious-looking stone in the centre; this was called, "shooting the poison-balls;" and although both sides were often equally guilty, yet the first party who discovered it proclaimed war to the knife without mercy; then came the *mélée*; rank closed upon rank, Scholar and Creeshie were

mingled together; we pulled, tugged, rolled, bonneted, and tried to overthrow and bury each other in the snow; and that the thaw might have less work, endeavoured to thrust handfulls of it down one another's throats. Even the little ones, when they saw a huge adversary overthrown, were ready to rush in at the death, and the fore-ground of battle was broken with figures in almost every attitude; the cries for quarter were too often buried amid the merry ringing of laughter; then came the retreat, for, like the Parthians, we fought flying, until the enemy was drawn from the stronghold of the higher ground he occupied; and to accomplish this required no small generalship, for during the stratagem, the conquerors were again reconquered. If we succeeded in driving the Creeshies into the town, we were in danger of some secret ambuscade, for they found an ally in every hut; and over every low fence strode forth some new foeman. Even the blacksmith, as he leant over the door of his smithy, looked sullenly upon our victory; and, upon one occasion we had so completely routed the enemy, that pursuit became useless, so rapid was their flight, when Vulcan stepped forth upon that neutral ground which had always separated the pursued from the pursuers, and



waving a bar of iron in his hand, he sent his deep-throated voice back amongst the Creeshies, exclaiming, "Cowards!" That single word, like a magic spell, checked all further retreat. We had now to fight our battle over again, for they had found a new leader in the burley bare-armed blacksmith. As the combat deepens where the banner is displayed, and its folds wave over the thickest of the strife, so did we with one accord, rush to wrench the bar of iron from the formidable smith; but imagine our consternation, when upon grasping it, we found the villanous Vulcan had beforehand made it hot, and the first little fellow who had the courage to seize it, burnt his hand dreadfully, one or two more attempted to wrench it from him, but the yells they raised became the signal of retreat. We leapt, we jumped, we ran, we looked unutterable things at each other; and having now found, when it was too late, that discretion is the better part of valour, took to our heels, twenty running like one, not even staying to pick up our wounded. Nor was this all, the cowardly Creeshies, whom beforetime we had so gloriously beaten, now rent the air with shouts of victory; but the laurels they had won were not the first gathered in the same way, for a Creeshie one day seeing one of our

school-fellows alone, commenced pelting him ; the high spirited boy was up and after him in an instant, and had just succeeded in administering a kick, as the Creeshie took shelter in a dyer's yard, when turning courageously around upon our school-fellow, he said, " Come on, ye coward, here's six of us now, and we don't fear you."

Sir Walter Scott chanced to visit Galashiels on the morning which followed this snow-balling affray ; and gossiping with each auld wife at the doors of the cottages while he passed along, as was his custom, he observed a youth with his hands bandaged, and in his usual kind manner began to inquire what was the matter ? The boy, who had often attracted Sir Water's attention by his spirited conduct amongst his playfellows, colouring up to the very brow, muttered something about having burnt his hand ; and slunk away into the remotest corner of the cottage. Not so with the auld wife, " she up" and told the Sherra all about the snow-balling, and the battle with the Creeshies, and how, when the bairns had beaten them, as they were skeltering off, as if they bade auld Nick take the hindermost, out came that never-do-good blackguard of a blacksmith, with a hot bar of iron, with which he began to bang the bairns as the de'il did St. Dunstan ; and

how that her laddie, who had a spice o' the auld Borderer's bluid in his veins, an' came o' kin o' those who had carried the claymore, as his father, brave man, would hae done, seized the iron bar, but finding it hot, left go like a wise chield as he waur, and just came hame wi' naething but the skin burnt clean off his hands; and that she wished she had the blacksmith there to sit for five minutes in her gridling iron, and a red turf low beneath him of her own making. "That would make crackling of his corderoys," said Sir Walter laughing; then in another moment assuming that look of seriousness which like light and shade, shifting and moving over the face of a lake with rapid transition, played upon his expressive countenance, said, "Play is play, but it is too bad to burn the bairn; bring him up to the school, and I will send for the smith;" and away he went, planting his oaken staff with a firmer blow upon the ground, as was his custom when excited. Sir Walter's approach was announced by the cat rushing into the school, with her back up, and her tail thickened, with Hamlet, one of his favourite hounds, close upon her heels; over form and desk rushed the pursued and the pursuer, while poor Grimalkin, hard pressed, made one bold dash for it, and went clean

through a pane of glass, much to our amusement. Hamlet mounted the desk, thrust his head through the pane, and began to bark furiously, a cry that was responded to by every dog that followed in Sir Walter's train.

The Baronet, without ceremony, after exchanging a few words with the schoolmaster, planted himself upon one of the forms, with both hands resting upon his stout walking-staff, while Maida and Hamlet lay stretched on each side of him like two supporters, and the rest of the dogs, awed into order by his commanding voice, now crouched at his feet, and there sat the author of "Waverley," ready to administer justice. Imagine the whisperings amongst ourselves, a consciousness that something was about to take place of more than ordinary import; for we knew not what eyes might have been blackened, or what heads broken, amid the affray of the preceding day, although many of us bore the marks of "a hard-fought field:" but guess our surprise, when the hero of the burnt hand, followed by his mother, and the down-looking blacksmith, with a group of dirty Creeshies, accompanied by the constable of Galashiels, entered the school. A few of us were inclined to make a bolt of it, but the broad-shouldered constable, at a given signal

from the Sherra, closed the door, and thrust the key into his pocket, as he looked round with a triumphant air, as if to say, "Here, you dogs, are I and the Sherra, run who dare." We soon saw, from the first opening of the proceeding, that there was evidently a leaning on the part of Sir Walter to the weaker side; he began with the beginning, found no fault, nor passed one severe comment upon our old snow-balling feud, adding, that they were such contests as he himself had mingled in when a boy; "but they put stanes in the snow-balls, please yer worship," exclaimed one of the Creeshies, "and sent them bang at our heads." "Tut, tut;" answered Sir Walter, "so they might put a walnut into a nightcap, and yet break no bones; so you must pay back a blow from a small stone cased over with two or three inches of snow, by blows from a heated bar of iron, very manly and very warlike; you would make a brave leader of a clan if your foes were armed with squirts, and you carried sledge hammers for claymores, what say you, my brave man of iron?" The smith hung down his head, commenced biting his thumb, looked up to the ceiling as if there he saw an answer, fidgeted about his foot, and not looking where he trod, pressed rather too heavily upon

Hamlet's paw, and was repaid by one quick, unceremonious bite in the thick part of the leg. "Oh! the beast," exclaimed Vulcan, stooping down and rubbing the calf of his leg, now no longer at a loss for a reply. "The very dog has found you out," exclaimed the Judge, "and had he been present yesterday, would no doubt have administered the same justice upon your breiks;" and then turning round to the old woman, he exclaimed, "Hamlet would have scored the crackling for thee, dame, before it went on thy gridling iron."

The smith in his defence, stated that the bar had fallen over the forge by chance, and that he took it up without being aware that it was hot; that he was unconscious he had dealt a blow with it upon any one; that the mischief was done unintentionally, through the boy trying to wrench the bar of iron out of his hand. This evidence we corroborated, as it was a mischance which arose more out of accident than malice; and Sir Walter, presenting the hero of the burnt hands with half-a-guinea, rose up, exclaiming, "Weel, weel, the Prince of Denmark has let him off with a slight punishment, which we must consider the sentence of this court;" then turning to the blacksmith, he added, "But mark ye, my man

of iron, had Maida been the executioner, she would have made you loup up like the winsome witch in 'Tam o' Shanter,' without a nethermost rag;" so terminated the trial at our school-room at Galashiels.

Who knows but that from such scenes as these, the great Novelist may have gathered some of those laughable incidents for his novels as in *Rob Roy*, where Bailey Nicol Jarvie quelled his opponents, and cleared the room with the heated poker?

## CHAPTER IV.

## TOM PURDIE, SIR WALTER'S FACTOTUM.

HAVING occasionally mentioned Sir Walter Scott's great factotum, Tom Purdie, I feel in duty bound to bring him forward in this chapter, and to place him in a more prominent position than any he has hitherto occupied, for never was friendship more perfect between master and servant, than that between Sir Walter Scott and honest Tom. Still they were like some old attached couple, and had their "bickerings" occasionally, for Tom very much liked to have things his own way, and that way did not always coincide with the views of the Laird of Abbotsford; and on such occasions there was, so to speak, a coolness between them, though it never altered the deep affection that lay at the bottom; for that, like the anchor, which holds on, unmoved by the petty storms that occasionally rock the ocean on which the vessels repose, ever remained firm.

I think it is Washington Irving who gives



one of Sir Walter's anecdotes of an old Scotch laird and his servant who could not always agree, and that one day, when the master's anger rose a little higher than usual, he said, "This will never do, we cannot live together any longer, we must part;" that the servant, after gazing upon the old laird for several seconds in speechless astonishment, said, "And whaur do ye think o' ganging tae, when ye ance leave me." I verily believe Tom Purdie thought that everything at Abbotsford would have gone to sixes and sevens, in a week, had anybody but himself superintended the affairs. Tom's was rather a strange introduction, as he was first brought before Sir Walter, in his capacity of sheriff of Selkirk, on a charge of poaching. Tom gave the "Sherra" such a deplorable account of his circumstances, in so simple and straightforward a manner, that Sir Walter took pity on his poverty; especially when he related that he had a wife and several bairns dependent upon him; and in his own dry humorous way he went on to state that he found work very scarce and game very plentiful, so he just "girmed a hare or twa to prevent them frae doing any mischief." And so by his quaint, humorous manner, Tom escaped the penalty of the law, and was at first taken into

the employment of Sir Walter as shepherd, and by his good conduct was shortly afterwards raised to a position of more importance, in the service of Abbotsford; nor did he ever give the worthy Baronet cause to regret the trust he had placed in him, for never had master one more faithful to his interest than Tom Purdie was to Sir Walter Scott.

It would be presumption in me to attempt a description of Tom Purdie after the great minstrel has limned him with his own hand in the pages of "Red Gauntlet," and Sir Walter's biographer has also added a few finishing touches worthy of the master himself, and both of which I must avail myself of before proceeding further with my narrative. "He was, perhaps, sixty years old," says Sir Walter, "yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his yet black hair was only grizzled, not whitened by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square made, thin flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigour, a hard and harsh countenance; eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like

his hair; a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness and size, a breadth of which might have become the jaws of an ogre, complete this delightful portrait." "Equip this figure," says Lockhart, "in Scott's cast off green jacket, white hat, and drab trousers: and imagine that years of kind treatment, comfort, and the honest consequences of a confidential *grieve*, had softened away much of the harshness originally impressed on the visage by anxious penury, and the sinister habits of a black fisherman, and then Tom Purdie stands before us."

Tom was 'a shrewd, humorsome kind of fellow, and appeared to me always to have his own way, and his peculiarities at times afforded Sir Walter the greatest amusement. That he was self-willed there is no doubt, but he was also well disposed; zealous, and active in the interest of his employer, and one not to be trifled with; for few would insult Tom after looking at his broad shoulders, thick-set frame, and face well browned with the sun, to say nothing of his capacious fists, hardened by industry, and ready either to fell a tree or any one that ventured to insult him.

When in the woods in the green coat and white hat of his master, Sir Walter would

sometimes, remark "Tom only wanted a bow and arrow to look like one of Robin Hood's followers." I was fortunate enough to be one of Tom's few favourites, for he was surly as the "rough north wind" to such as he did not happen to take a fancy to.

There was no love lost between Tom Purdie and John of Skye, as the piper was named, who, in full costume, was sometimes called upon to play before a dinner party at Abbotsford, John of Skye, who was as clever on the pipes, as Tom was at agriculture, had been raised from the position of hedger and ditcher to that of piper of Abbotsford, which was at least quite as respectable a position to be raised from as Tom's, as we have already shown. But this jealousy which had hitherto smouldered in silence, burst out into full blaze after the brief visit which Prince Leopold paid Sir Walter, when he praised John of Skye's playing and said it was the best he had heard in all Scotland. Tom was not in one of his sweetest of humours on the evening of the Prince's departure, as he had been hurried about in the morning, hunting for game, for the luncheon of the titled visitor, who came to Abbotsford quite unexpectedly; Tom was sitting on a bench in the September sunset, cleaning the gun

which he had been using in the morning, when up came John of Skye to tell him of what the Prince had said about his playing. Tom listened with a disapproving grunt, and without uttering a word until the piper had finished, said, "Hout mon, did ye nae hear what the Prince said about mysel?" John of Skye confessed that he did not. "Weel then mon, I'll just tell ye," said Tom; "he wanted me tae gang awa' wi' him, an' be made his Royal huntsman, an' the Prince bade me gie his compliments tae ye mon, an' tae say, that if ye thought o' flitting, he should want a swineherd, an' ye might gang wi' me tae pipe the piggies hame at bedtime." John of Skye never spoke to Tom again for a month or two after this, "Pipe the piggies hame," he used to say with a toss of his head, "an' there were war between the clans again, I'd mak' him dance tae my claymore."

Tom Purdie had discovered the haunt of a badger in the Abbotsford woods, and we having gained the information from him, requested to be present at the capture, which was agreed upon. As the badger is of nocturnal habits, and only leaves its hole to feed at night, we selected the full of the moon for our operations. Its hole or den was at the foot of an old tree,

and having obtained a strong sack, we made a running noose, securing the end at the top to the stem of the tree (after having discovered that our prey was out feeding), conscious that, when we drove him in, the mouth of the sack would close by the force that he would enter it, and that the only means he would have of escaping would be by eating his way out of the sack, which feat we did not intend to leave him time to accomplish. All being in readiness, away we went with the dogs, and commenced such a loud whoop and halloo, as even to reach the ears of Sir Walter, and he, along with some gentleman whose name I do not now remember, sallied out to see what mischief was afloat.

They came up, just as we had succeeded in bagging Mr. Badger, and right heartily did the worthy Baronet laugh, to see two of us carrying our captive very gingerly in the sack, one holding each end of it, while the prisoner, plunging from one end to the other, made our finger ends tingle again, as we expected every moment to receive a sharp bite. "Ye hae caught a Tartar, Geordie," said Sir Walter, "and what will ye do wi' the bit beastie? he'll mak' but a fearfu' bedfellow, an' gobble ye up as the wolf did little Red Riding Hood."

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It was at length decided that we should turn the badger loose until morning in an empty stable, when the mettle of one or two of the dogs of the Pepper and Mustard breed was to be tried. Then came another difficulty; how were we to get out of the stable without the badger following and escaping at the same time? Tom Purdie would soon have managed that, for he was game to the back bone, but I resolved to accomplish this myself, having fancied that Sir Walter had doubted my courage; so into the stable I went with the badger in the bag, and the job then was, how to shake out the badger, without being shaken by the badger. To accomplish this, I got astride of one of the partitions that divided the horse stalls, and having slackened the cord, laid hold of the bottom of the sack, and after a shake or two out he came, and was soon hidden somewhere on the shadowy side of the stable. "All right," exclaimed I, "he's under the straw for the night." Tom Purdie opened the door, and just then I caught a glance of Sir Walter's face in the moonlight, and was stepping outside, when out rushed the badger, bang between Tom Purdie's legs, prostrating him on his back, and giving one of the dogs a sharp bite at the same time; he shot off in the direction of the

tation, and we saw him no more that night. I believe from my heart that the Minstrel was thankful for the badger's escape, and I am sure that we were, were it only for the good things he said about the downfall of his factotum Tom. "Hout man," said he, "ye would do famously to mount a breach an' there were nae enemy behind, but, zounds man, if a badger showed himsel', ye would be after turning to him the hindermost part o' yer breeks, Tom; and running a race for it, unless he chanced to lay hold of that part o' your nether integuments." I fancied Tom did not much like the roasting he got that night, for I heard him say, "The Sherra's too hard on a' body, for a mishap." The badger, was, however, caught on a future day, and, if I mistake not, was stuffed and added to the many sylvan trophies which then hung about the halls of Abbotsford.

Tom was very fond of a pipe, and as he had often laughed at us while gathering fairy-stones, called them "common chucky-stanes" and such like, and as we well knew that at heart he was a true believer in all "Auld Scottish lore," we resolved whenever a chance offered to cry quits with him. We were busy one day in an arbour on the banks of the Tweed in the Abbotsford plantation, examining



the fairy-cradles we had been collecting, when Tom chanced to come up, with his boots in his hand, for he had just forded the Tweed, and seating himself on one of the little hillocks by the side of which he laid down his pipe, began as usual bantering us about the "little folk." One of the boys having some gunpowder in his pocket placed a pinch of it on the top of the portion Tom Purdie had left in his pipe, which after a time he took up and putting some fresh tobacco on the old, Tom lighted it. He was puffing away, and we were remarking that the fairies would be revenged on him some day, for speaking so lightly about them, when bang went the powder and off flew the pipe head. "Gudeness sake as a'," exclaimed Tom, after a long pause and a look of indescribable wonder, "I didna ken they waur sae spitefu'. It's my belief thae wee bodies can hear fine a' yer' talking about," and he seized his boots and while in the act of putting them on, he shouted out most lustily and commenced rolling himself on the grass cursing the fairies with all his might, who he considered were playing him a savage trick. We looked at Tom with perfect astonishment and wondered what had given rise to such antics, when he at last got up and stamped his foot upon the ground, but to no plan-

purpose; then throwing himself upon the bank he begged to have his boot pulled off, and while performing that operation the pain he was suffering was so acute he allowed himself to be dragged along the grass, as the boot would not come off, until two boys held on by each shoulder, while another succeeded in getting off the boot, and down poor Tom's sun-burnt face rolled the perspiration caused by the pain, and, on turning the boot up out dropped a disabled wasp which had left its sting in the sole of Tom Purdie's foot. Just at this juncture of affairs Sir Walter came up, and as Tom laid all the blame to the fairies, Sir Walter bade him be cautious how he spoke about them in future or he'd have them haunt him in his very bed. "Those green hill-folk have strange ways with them, Tom," said Sir Walter, "and sometimes make a lodgment in the shape of a pinch of snuff, and dance a reel upon a man's midriff—the devils that rushed into the herd of swine are angels compared to these fairies when they are angered." Tom declared he would forswear snuff for ever, and be more careful with his pipe.

With scarcely an exception, from the bottom of his soul Tom Purdie had a dislike to Englishmen, and as Sir Walter numbered gentlemen

of almost every country amongst his numerous guests, England, of course, supplied her share, and that the largest. Tom, in his character of sportsman's attendant, was compelled to accompany these visitors occasionally, and every feather they knocked down he begrudged; every morsel of fur they scattered was a heavy grievance in Tom's eyes; but, as he dare not express his feelings towards his master's guests, he would frequently give vent to them over the game they shot; and sometimes I have stumbled upon him in my rambles, while he was in this humour. "Do but ken," Tom would say, showing me the game he carried, "Eh, Geordie, laddie, its enaugh to mak' a body greet to see what fuils the birds and hares are to let those Englanders kill them. An' it were their ain bonny countrymen that just brought them doon it wad seem but natural like, but no to ken a Scotchman frae a Southern, ah, what fuils the birds maun be, laddie. An' yet, aiblins, their parents came frae o'er the border, an' they are nae Scotch game after a'." And this thought seemed to afford Tom some comfort, though, as I used to tell him, I did not think the birds, if it were left to themselves, would give a pin to choose, as to whether they would be shot by a Scotchman or an Englishman. But Tom

shook his head, and gave me a shrewd look, as if the recollection had just flashed across his mind that the nation he so despised was the "land of my birth," and signifying "that he still had his doubts;" and when once he had made up his mind about anything, it was no easy matter to get him to alter his opinion.

Tom was once at Selkirk with the "Sherra," and waiting at one of the taverns where Sir Walter's horses were stabled, when the jury came in for refreshment. They were in high argument about some case which had not "been proven," and in which the defendant had been boxing the plaintiff's ears. The only witness, it appeared, was a waiter in the tavern where the assault had been committed, and in which the jury then met, and although he had not seen the plaintiff's ears boxed, swore to having heard the boxing, while listening in the passage. After many arguments, doubts, and disputes, it was proposed by one of the jurymen, who seemed a little more "canny" than the rest, that two of them should go into the room, close the door, and one box the other's ears, while the rest of the party listened outside, and that such would be the best way to settle the dispute. There was, however, some difficulty in finding a jurymen willing to prove the case, by sub-

mitting to the proposal of having his ears boxed, and at last, an offer of a shilling, beside whiskey, was made to Tom Purdie, who, having got the money and drank the whiskey, went into the room with the jurymen, a little tailor of Selkirk, to have his ears boxed, though it appears that Tom did not quite understand the bargain. The jury outside listened, and not only heard the blow, but was instantly startled by the loud cries of "help! help! help!" which proceeded from their brother jurymen the tailor; they rushed in, and found him prostrate on the floor, and Tom standing over him with clenched fist, bidding him "get up and be doomed, for a cowardly tyke of a tailor." When the poor jurymen was lifted up, and began to state his case, it appeared, that he had no sooner fetched Tom a box on the ear, than the latter up with his fist and knocked the tailor down, adding, "I made nae bargain mon, tae hae my ain lugs clooted;" that the tailor returned the blow, and they had another round before the jury entered the room. When Tom, who had not escaped without a swollen lip, told Sir Walter how he got it through serving on a jury, and explained the whole business; the sheriff laughed heartily, especially as Tom wanted him to bring an action against

the foreman of the jury, for "teeking him in about the circumstantial evidence, when he bargained a' the time tae cloot the tailor's lugs, an' no' for the tailor to cloot his ain."

I think the anecdote has been told, that when Sir Walter Scott was created a Baronet, by George IV., Tom was missing all the day after the news reached Abbotsford, and that when he returned at night he looked like a Red Indian, he was so raddled, through marking the sheep with the baronet's new title. But Tom's scholarship on this occasion, like his sign board, "The rod to Selkirk," was at fault, and has, I believe, never been mentioned, nor am I able to give the name of the party who set him to rights. The sheep were before marked W.S.A., which signified plain enough that they were the property of Walter Scott of Abbotsford. It was getting on to noon when the friend who told me the anecdote, was passing by the field in which Tom and his companion were busy putting on the new marks, when he stopped to look on, his attention being drawn by the unusual bleating which the sheep made; and great was his surprise to find several of them marked with S.W.S.K.S.S.K.A.B.L., which marks puzzled my friend extremely, and when he came to inquire, Tom told him that "they

stood for Sir Walter Scott, Knight and Sheriff of Selkirkshire, Knight of Abbotsford, and Barrownight of Lunnon;" for Tom could not think but that his master had a title in London although he hated the English; and I believe he had some shrewd notion that ever after when Sir Walter went to visit the metropolis of England, his residence was in the Tower. "Oh, but he's an awfu' great laird now," Tom used to say, "and stands next to the Duke of Wellington, and aiblins he'll be made commander-in-chief; gudeness only kens, and I shall be his heddy-camp," for so honest Tom pronounced the title of his expected promotion.

In one of his letters from Edinburgh Sir Walter speaks of Tom's numerous avocations as follows;—"John Winnos (now John Winnos is the sub-oracle of Abbotsford, the principal being Tom Purdie), John Winnos pronounces that the pinaster seed ought to be raised at first on a hot bed, and thence transplanted to a nursery; so to a hot-bed they have been carefully conveyed, the upper oracle not objecting, in respect that his talents lie in catching a salmon, or finding a hare sitting, on which occasions (being a very complete scrub) he solemnly exchanges his working jacket for an old green one of mine, and takes the air of one

of Robin Hood's followers; his more serious employments are ploughing, harrowing and overseeing my premises, being a complete Jack-of-all-trades; from the carpenter to the shepherd, nothing comes strange to him, and being extremely honest, and somewhat of a humorist, he is quite my right hand." Sir Walter also familiarly called him his "pony," through leaning on Tom's shoulder for support, whenever he took walking exercise; and a proud man was Tom of the trust thus reposed in him.

Tom was very close with his master's money, and many a "tift" was there between him and Mr. Laidlaw, at the time planting was carried on, as the new grounds were added from time to time to the Abbotsford estate. When Sir Walter was in Edinburgh, Tom was entrusted with money to purchase trees and pay the labourers, and sometimes the Baronet would send over an order in the letter he might chance to write to Mr. Laidlaw, for a certain number of young plants to be purchased. Now, whether or not it was jealousy on Tom's part, that the letter had not come to him direct, or he had a dislike to receiving orders at second hand at the time he was entrusted with the funds, or whatever it might be; there was as much difficulty in coaxing Tom out of the necessary



funds, as there would be to get a miser to spend a shilling in pleasure.

All had a dread of dealing with Tom Purdie, and shunned him as much as the Smith did the black dog Hamlet, after the punishment inflicted on him in the school of Galashiels. They liked to deal with Sir Walter himself, for he never beat them down in price, and Tom, knowing this, did all he could to prevent them from bargaining with him. If any stranger came up, and wanted to see the Laird of Abbotsford, Tom would knit his brow and say, "An' what may yer business be, my mon?" and there were no end of schemes to keep Tom in the dark, as to the business in hand, and to get at the principal. All this Sir Walter knew, and I have often fancied that there is a faint trace or two of honest Tom in the character of the Laird of Dumbiedykes, in the "Heart of Mid-Lothian." But it was only with his master's money that Tom was so miserly, he would spend his own free enough on those who pleased him, a clear proof that he was not selfish.

No greater evidence can be adduced, of the high estimation in which the servant was held by the master, than the deep sorrow Sir Walter evinced, when he lost his faithful old henchman, who

died very suddenly, and whose head he lowered into the grave with his own hands. There is something very simple and very touching in the epitaph Sir Walter wrote for honest Tom's monument, in the scriptural quotation of, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things." How exquisitely is the opening worded—"In Grateful Remembrance of the Faithful and Attached Services of Twenty-two Years. And in sorrow for the Loss of a Humble and Sincere Friend." But few masters were so faithfully served; but few servants so affectionately loved, as the hardy forester, Tom Purdie, was by the Author of Waverley. Peace to his ashes.

"After Life's fitful fever he sleeps well,"

near to another humble and faithfully attached friend, Johnny Bowers, both of whom are buried by the old Abbey of Melrose.

## CHAPTER V.

## SIR WALTER SCOTT'S OUT-OF-DOOR HABITS.

I HAVE often thought Sir Walter Scott's love of rural life, and his attachment to country scenery, were never more beautifully expressed than in his own picturesque language, in his wish to sit under the shadow of a tree of his own planting, and in his confession to the author of "Bracebridge Hall," that "if he could not set his foot upon the heather once a year he should soon die." I may be wrong, but I sincerely believe that he felt as anxious to perpetuate his name through the estate of Abbotsford, and to leave it linked with the towers he had reared, and the woods he had planted, as ever he did to establish a literary reputation; nay, further, that towards the close of his life this feeling predominated over the ambition of Authorship, and that the latter was but a secondary consideration.

It would be a novel task to go through his letters, and collect his sayings to prove this. Yet I feel certain, that if such a labour were

undertaken, that what I have asserted his own words would tend to confirm. What a fine eye he had for the beauties of nature! in no works that preceded his can any such beautiful descriptions of rural scenery be found; so minute in detail, so rich in colour, and, above all, so true to nature. It is on record, that when he went to visit the scenery before commencing the poem of "Rokeby," he even noticed the little wild flowers that grew in the neighbourhood, and made notes of their names. I mention these things merely because they have struck me as worthy of observation, and also because I do not remember seeing them noticed by any other writers who have commented upon his works.

One day while walking with Sir Walter, we were attracted to a bank by the loud buzzing noise made by a bee. Upon examining the spot closer we discovered that the noise was occasioned by the contest between the bee and a wasp, caused through the latter endeavouring to enter the hole in the bank which the bee was gallantly defending. After war had been waged for some time another bee came out of the nest, and finding the wasp was getting the best of it, flew upon the wasp's back, and a desperate battle ensued, for by this time

several other bees came out as if determined to annihilate the poor wasp, who stood the contest boldly, but was at length shoved, carried, and poked a good distance from the entrance, and there left for a time. But nothing daunted, he ventured again upon the attack, when Sir Walter observed, "Did ever any body see sic courage as the bit wasp has got." Several bees had now collected around the hole, and five or six set upon the poor wasp with a determination to kill him, for while one attacked him in the front, another flew upon his back and began biting his wings, until at last there was not a bit left; though the wasp still fought on, until exhausted and overpowered by numbers, they turned him upon his back and left him dead. Sir Walter watched them with an interest truly surprising, and the changes of expression in his countenance showed how his mind was at work even upon so trifling a circumstance. "It is wonderful the strength of the wasp," said Sir Walter Scott. Their bodies being joined or connected by a mere thread, it is truly astonishing how much strength they possess. But they are very lazily inclined, and go about robbing and plundering their neighbours, the bees, with all the dare-devilry which I have just described, and, as in this instance, do not

always escape unpunished. Their nest or hive is very extraordinary, they sometimes build them in the ground, but more frequently we find them suspended like a paper-bag, from a whin-bush, or a young fir-tree. I remember on this occasion Sir Walter pointed to one tree, and as we walked towards it said, "It is from the skill of this little creature that we first conceived the idea of making paper."

Upon another occasion, while walking with him in the plantations, we saw a hedgehog in the distance; he stepped aside to watch it, observing, "No doubt the mysterious little creature has a home hereabouts." Ere long it turned over some leaves in a haugh, and at length disappeared, when from the interior some dry leaves were pushed out so carefully that a stranger might unconsciously tread upon the threshold of its home, and pass on. Sir Walter was much interested, and gave a beautiful description of the habits of the hedgehog, which showed how familiar such subjects were to him. He explained, how when attacked it would roll itself up like a ball, and remain motionless until it supposed there was no longer any danger; told how its feeding time was in the night, and how it slept throughout the whole of the winter. Indeed he never walked

out without pointing to some interesting object of nature on which he discoursed—

“Most eloquent music.”

One day, while out on Jeanie Dean's Moor searching for pewet's eggs, or shooting at whatever came in our way, we heard the shouting of the herdsman, who had emerged from his little mud-thatched box on the top of the hill, and seeing his dog scattering the sheep as he hastened towards us, we beat a retreat, and such was our haste that we thought not of bogs and gulfs, although we well knew from past experience that once immersed in them it was no easy matter to escape. Presently, in went two of our companions, with the dog close at their heels, and as we turned back to extricate them, one of our party wounded the dog with an arrow in the leg, and after a good deal of exertion we landed our compeers on firm ground; but no sooner was this accomplished, than we heard a shrill screaming in the lower plantation, and observed a large kite devouring a partridge close by a whin-bush: we let fly our arrows, and the kite soared into the air, but was soon exhausted by the wound and fell; we found the wing had been struck, but not broken. We hastened home and tethered the kite by

the leg, in the play ground, when many of the gentry came to see it with Mr. Craig, the banker, and among others, Sir Walter Scott. And well do I remember how fixedly he looked upon the fell destroyer we had captured, and so much admired the bird that we begged his acceptance of it, and agreed to take it over to Abbotsford, as soon as the wing was healed; but on the day we had intended going over to Abbotsford with the bird, we had the mortification to see our prisoner spread out his broad pinions and fly unfettered in the direction of the Tweed. We followed him with our eye until he was lost amid the Abbotsford plantations; and when we made our loss known to Sir Walter, he said, "Kind to kind, and I munna begrudge the puir bird a chicken or two after what he has suffered, and by the look of him he will not bide the asking, if he lights down among the brood, but e'en help himsel' to the first 'chick-a-diddle' that comes within his clutches."

Amid these out-of-door reminiscences I remember one ludicrous accident. A lady in a white dress was walking with Sir Walter beside a wild lake which lay on part of the estate, when one of the dogs, which had rushed into the water after some wild-fowl, came out at



a muddy part of the embankment, and began to shake himself, and to scatter the dirty drops over the lady's delicate dress; the author of *Marmion* pulled out his handkerchief, and with some quaint quotation began to wipe down the lady's dress, and never did I see a droller expression than his countenance assumed when he found that his rubbing only made matters worse.

This wild, solitary lake I loved to visit, for it was said to be haunted by a water-bull that sometimes came to the surface and scattered the water far and wide, then after a deep bellow again disappeared. This terrible monster I never saw, though on one occasion I started a large otter that was feeding on a fish beside the lake, and I have but little doubt that this was the water-bull which some of the peasants said they had seen. I wonder this legend never figured in his works, a water-fiend in his hands would have been made into a rare monster, a something almost as original as Caliban. I remember once seeing him seated by this wild lake with his gaze fixed upon the water, and though I approached within a few yards, he neither heard nor saw me, so deeply was he wrapped in some reverie. He would often seat himself alone for half an hour or more together

in his plantations, buried in thought, and as Tom Purdie used to say, "deil a ought would ye get frae him but a yea or a nay at sic times." These were no doubt the moments he alludes to when he says his thoughts sometimes would be off to another world; perhaps he was then in the forest of Sherwood, or some such spot as he has peopled in his pages.

I was one day standing beside Sir Walter by the edge of the lake, while Tom Purdie was pottering about the embankment, and doing something or another, when the Minstrel began to talk about mermaids and water-nymphs who lived in coral halls, had long green hair and beautiful countenances, and allured foolish lovers who listened to their wild songs to visit them, when they disappeared under the water and were never seen again. Tom with his large mouth open, and listening with attentive ear, swallowed every syllable, and no doubt believed every word. "Gudeness save us a'," exclaimed Tom, "I wadna' like to be sib wi' sic awfu' lassies, wha get a honest mon doon amang thae weeds, then strangle him before he's time to say 'How's a' wi ye.' An' do the like o' thae bodies sleep under the water, ye ken?" "Sleep! to be sure they do," answered Sir Walter, "cook, wash, brew, bake, and nurse their

children." Tom paused a moment, then said, "I hae my doubts about the cooking an' brewing, because ye ken they maun hae a fire, an' the reek wad come out o' the water, an' deil a lum is there in the whole lake." Sir Walter smiled, called Tom an unbeliever, and turned way leaving him to his meditations.

The smallest children met Sir Walter without a "feeling of fear," even when caught trespassing in the plantations of Abbotsford, and instead of shunning him, they would approach with their homely bows and curtsies, and show him the ripe nuts they had gathered. I believe there was not a child for miles around the neighbourhood that would wilfully either have broken a branch, or pulled up a blade of grass, if they thought that doing so would have injured the Laird of Abbotsford.

What a picture it was to see him standing in some woodland walk, where the sunshine made a golden net-work as it fell and chequered the peaceful group, while he patted the little heads of the children, and talked to them in that simple style which is familiar to us in a few passages of "Tales of a Grandfather," addressed to Hugh Littlejohn. Many of those children must now be young men and women, who remember meeting him in their happy and childish rambles.

There was one sport in which Sir Walter took great delight, and that was, salmon-hunting in the river Gala by night, or, as it is called, "burning the water," which is pursued in the following manner: the parties embark in a small boat, some with lighted torches, others with fire grates filled with pieces of old barrels, saturated in such flammable materials as give a good blazing light, and thus attract the fish, and by such means they are discovered. Some of the party then keep a watch on the banks of the river with lights; others are armed with liesters, and whenever they see a salmon, they strike, and sometimes manage to capture one out of every twenty they take aim at. The scene is exceedingly animating when seen, as I have occasionally witnessed it, from Gala Scaur, a height of about three hundred feet, as the voice ascends, and the looker-on can hear their merriment, and witness their scrambling about in the water. Sometimes when liesterling from the boat the excited fisherman chances to upset it, and three or four of his companions are left to flounder in the water and get out the best way they can, occasionally breaking their shins against the large stones, so numerous in the river Gala. Sir Walter delighted in a good ducking, and Washington Irving tells a racy

story of his once pausing to relate some tale as they were fording the Tweed, when the foot of the great Minstrel slipped, and he went souse head over ears, losing his stick, which was afterwards picked up some considerable distance from where the accidental immersion took place. I think it was on this occasion that he quoted a few lines from the "Monastery," exclaiming—

"Merrily swim we," etc., etc.

I often regret that more has not been said of his out-of-door habits; for amiable and social as Sir Walter always was, yet to see him thoroughly, was when you stumbled upon him in his merriest moods, amongst his workmen thinning the woods of Abbotsford. Labour then became mirth, he had a word for every one, he cracked his joke with the humblest, and wielded his axe with the stoutest, and not many could bring a tree to the earth with fewer blows than he could. Then his odd comparisons, his quaint sayings, his strange allusions. If a tree took more felling than usual, it was compared to some old Border-chief in his stronghold, with an account of how long he held out, and by what stratagem his head was at last laid low. Oh, what a delight it was for us to be allowed to bustle about amongst

the workmen, to stack the branches under the great master's eye, and be rewarded with a word of kind encouragement, or to listen to some merry jest, told with that humorous twinkle of the eye which seemed to laugh from under the overhanging brow, while our obstreperous mirth made all the woods ring again. What a picture it was to see him come up an avenue, with all the tools ready for his wood-craft in his belt, and Maida barking and bounding before him ; or mounted on his pony with all these implements around him, giving him a rustic look that was quite refreshing both to the eye and heart to see one so gifted condescend to join in such humble labour.

Then he would talk about the poetry that reigns over old forests, beginning with the Ancient Britons and the wild woods they lived among, speak of the maned bisons that went thundering among the underwood in those early ages, and the grim grey wolves which are so often mentioned by the old Welsh Bards, as prowling about among the slain in their ancient battle-fields. From thence his imagination would rush to the forest of Ardennes and the melancholy Jacques, Rosalind and the haunted deer that stooped to drink, Una with her milk-white lamb whose

sweet countenance made "sunshine in a shady place," with all the other woodland pictures in Spencer's Fairy Queen—

"Of forest and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear."

He often said that if he had to earn his bread by out-of door labour, he should choose the calling of a woodman in preference to that of any other, so that he might be out all day among the trees, and listen to the rustling of the leaves and the singing of the birds. Amid such sounds he said a poor man would have no time to think of poverty, forgetting in his enthusiasm that a tree would only be to him what the "Primrose by the river's brim" was to Peter Bell, and that it would have been his own genius that would have made the calling of a woodman poetical. But in these pleasant moods he paused not to reason, but giving the reins to fancy followed whithersoever she led. These were indeed happy days, and are gone to return no more.

One day while in the plantations, I met him retiring into the house, when he requested me to accompany him; and it was upon this occasion that I was first introduced to that amiable lady, Lady Scott, with—"You see I

have brought you an addition to the family.” Lady Scott received me in the kindest manner, and shortly after Charles came in, and we soon became friends, when Charles and I went out for a ramble. We now found Tom Purdie felling a tree with a pipe in his mouth, he promised us a good supple ash-stick to make a bow a-piece; as we wandered among the trees, Charles, seeing his sister in the distance, started off calling me to follow; he, however, returned saying, “Ut man, they are only my sisters Sophia and Anne.” With this assurance we started off together, endeavouring to outrun each other; I found the young ladies like their brother Charles, devoid of all pride. Sophia was very beautiful, Anne pensive but pleasing, they had been out gathering wild flowers and blooming heather among the hills. As we gamboled homeward the report of a gun was heard, “Weel done, Walter,” said Charles as he picked up a beautiful moor-cock his brother had shot; “Go down, sir,” he said, addressing a pretty little terrier which Sophia called Pepper, as it leaped upon her with its fore feet to be caressed, while two or three more were rolling and basking on the grass by Miss Anne. Walter hastened towards us, and the young ladies went in doors, and left us to pass our



time with the "dog and gun." He was an excellent shot, and was, if I remember rightly, at home on furlough, though I forget where his regiment was then quartered.

The fame of Sir Walter Scott having by this time been blown abroad, made me like many others always anxious to ascertain what was going forward at Abbotsford. Conscious that every day was fraught with some new adventure, through the many visitors who were constantly travelling northward for the purpose of seeing and conversing with the immortal author at Abbotsford, and examining the many curiosities which he had collected together, and which were now open to the host of admirers who flocked from all quarters of the world to visit the locality, rendered so popular by his far-famed writings.

Strolling one morning in autumn, I was surprised to see Tom Purdie with his tag-rag and bobtail, and all the greyhounds that could be mustered in the neighbourhood, making the best of their way towards Newark Hill, there to await the arrival of the Baronet and his guests to join in a grand coursing match. It will readily be imagined I was easily persuaded to join the group, and to share in the boisterous mirth, which every now and then

broke out, as we wended our way to the poetical banks of the Yarrow, misbehaving ourselves no doubt, as we knew we must keep something like grave decorum when the far-famed company arrived. Many a bare-legged and bare-headed callant, who had collected around Tom and his dogs, to procure the chosen distinction of attending on the chase, were tickling his ears with the dulcet appellation of Maister Purdie, though behind his back they called him by the old homely name of Tom the Gibbie—the name or appellation given to men working in the wood.

After a time the cavalcade came up, the author of "Waverley" mounted on Sybil Grey, smacking a large hunting whip playfully amongst us, as we stood looking on. Along with Sir Walter was Sir Humphrey Davy and others, while the author of the "Man of Feeling" was in a carriage called the "Sociable," along with Lady Scott. From the dress of Sir Humphrey it was evident he had equipped himself for the Waltonian sport, for he had cat-gut fly-lines twisted round his hat, while fly-hooks also glistened in as many hues and colours as if a swarm of insects had alighted on him. As the day was fine several of the ladies joined the party, and they took luncheon on

Newark Hill. Sir Humphrey's dress bore a strong contrast to that of the other sportsmen, for his fustian was bespattered with the previous day's fishing, which gave him the look of a true angler, and showed him in his native simplicity, divested of all pride and ceremony. Laidlaw was mounted upon his Hodden Grey, while the aged Mackenzie might have been taken for one of Robin Hood's followers, being dressed in a green jacket and white hat, and with a small whistle suspended round his neck. Sir Walter led the way, with his usual mirthfulness, and entered at once into the true enjoyment of the thing. Maida's loud barking at last announced the departure of the party, and the horsemen moved on, whilst some twenty lads and lasses followed in the rear. We took the nearest way to the scene of sport by crossing the plantations, and now and then stopping to witness the many disasters which some of the party encountered. Sir Walter was the first to leave the imprint of his stalworth figure in the soft mud at the bottom of a ditch which Sybil had attempted to leap. Honest Tom Purdie ran towards his master to assist him. But Sir Walter was no sooner mounted than he was off again with a loud merry laugh, which was echoed by the hound Maida, and

made the broad hills ring around. Nor was this the only accident, for during the day Sir Humphrey Davy got fairly bogged ; and never shall I forget the look of one of the attendants as he fished out the great philosopher's hat. He made a grab at it, and then tried to shake it off, but could not ; then he gave utterance to a deep, full-mouthed curse, and I verily believe he thought that some outlandish monster had got him in his grip, for every hook he had clutched had run into his hand. As Sir Walter said, "he danced weel without the music of John of Skye's bagpipes," and he certainly did cut some strange capers, much to the amusement of us all.

Many, however, were glad that the carriage chanced to be on the ground that day, for although Sir Walter was not seriously hurt, he received such a shaking as made him glad to return home in the vehicle ; though while the chase lasted—such was his spirit—that he would not allow any trifling accident, that befel himself, to mar the sport of others. In fact no man had less selfishness in his nature than he had. The welfare of others was ever uppermost in his mind, and he would at any time sacrifice his own pleasure and interest to make another happy. How truly was it said by an old poet—

"Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."

And if ever God's sun shone upon a just, a generous, a good, honest, kind-hearted, upright and honourable man—that man was Sir Walter Scott. Never did a man pass through this chequered life with so few faults, never had a mortal being so few failings. His was not the ever-acting and sanctimonious looking religion which ever sits groaning with folded hands and uplifted eyes, thinking of nothing else, than it was born for no other purpose than to be most deservedly damned. No, he looked on the bright side of even the future, did unto others as he would they should do unto him, and very often ten thousand times more than they ever did in return; and doing this, he looked to the dim and mysterious beyond, in faith and hope, enjoyed himself like a rational being, made all about him happy, and lived and died a genius, a gentleman, and a Christian. He had in his great brain

"Ample room and verge enough,"

to make every allowance for the failings of his fellow mortals, without visiting them with too severe a judgment; and all who knew him and

enjoyed his confidence, loved him for his great charitable heart, and wished they were as good as he. To see the man as he stands in his true light, naked and unconcealed, read his "Diary;" and then "commune with thine own heart," reader, and see if thou ever madest such a confession, or looked thy faults so full and fairly in the face as he did. No,

"Take him for all and all,  
We ne'er shall look upon his like again."

## CHAPTER VI.

## SIR WALTER SCOTT'S IN-DOOR HABITS.

SIR WALTER SCOTT had a great love for children, and those who can remember seeing the scholars drawn up on the green and flower-bordered lawn before Abbotsford, will recall the look of delight that mantled his expressive countenance while contemplating the little muster before him. Many who were then children, but are now grave men, and staid matrons, will also look back and recall his kind manner, his little compliments, the many inquiries he made, and the fatherly interest he displayed in the welfare, of both young and old, grave and gay, for he was alike kind to all.

It was on the last day of the old year, which is called Hogmany, that this muster of the school children took place at Abbotsford, when it was the custom of Sir Walter to give each boy and girl who came a penny, and an oaten cake; and great was this annual gathering around the door to receive the gifts from the hands of Sir Walter. Sometimes each boy was

dressed up in a grotesque manner, some with paper caps, others with their coats turned inside out, and armed with wooden swords, ready to engage in a mock encounter. According to custom they marched in order, headed by the best musician that could be found in the neighbourhood, which was often John of Skye; and when the bounty was distributed, a burlesque performance was gone through upon the bowling green, in which Sir Walter seemed to take great interest and find much delight, which he expressed by the frequent hearty bursts of laughter that evinced his enjoyment.

He was everywhere, if his presence could be found in any way to contribute to the happiness of others, for his time seemed at everybody's service; this has been remarked by many, and I trust I shall be pardoned for adding my own testimony to that of others. His persevering and unabating energy was one of the most striking traits of his character. I have known other literary men of energy, and close application; but such generally have only devoted their time to literary labour, and, above all, have endeavoured to make others conscious of their activity by boasting and rejoicing in it; while Sir Walter, neither in Authorship, nor in his contact with the affairs



of the world, ever seemed aware he was making any particular exertion. The machine, thus gigantic in its power, moved so easily that the master appeared to have no perception of the obstructions it overcame.

In comparing him with other authors, I have scarcely met with an exception; they have seemed to me to do little more than dream away their lives, if they are to be measured by the paucity of their productions. Sir Walter, like Wellington, neglected no "duty," and a pleasing comparison might with justice be drawn between those two great men. To corroborate this I cannot resist quoting a portion of one of his letters to Allan Cunningham, in which he says:—"I know, on the part of one who has the truest respect for the manly independence of character which rests for its support on industry, instead of indulging the foolish fastidiousness formerly supposed to be essential to the poetical temperament, and which has induced some men, of real talents, to become coxcombs—some to become sots—some to plunge themselves into want—others into the equal miseries of dependence, merely because, forsooth, they were men of genius, and wise above the ordinary and, I say, the manly duties of human life,—I'd rather be a kitten, and cry mew!

than write the best book in the world, on condition of laying aside common sense on the ordinary transactions and business of the world." He disliked laziness, and showed his abhorrence of it by his own unceasing industry, and in this he resembled "The Duke."

Another incident I must mention, in connection with Sir Walter Scott, as it brings to remembrance Coleridge's beautiful poem of "Christabel," and this arose from the ever memorable entertainment given at Abbotsford upon the occasion of the marriage of Sir Walter Scott's eldest son with the pretty heiress of Lohore, which was long remembered. On that occasion the noble building presented one grand illumination, and viewed from the Galashiels, or opposite bank of the river Tweed, showed one blaze of light; never before was such a festivity there given, never before was Abbotsford so lighted up; it called to mind some of those splendid scenes which the author of *Ivanhoe* has described in the old baronial halls of his matchless novels. With the first peep of morning all were up and busy assisting in the process familiarly known as "turning the house out of windows," and a perpetual parcel delivery company at the door, kept the bell and the servants on the vibration the

whole morning. All the superfluous articles of furniture, belonging to the lower part of the mansion were removed to the bed-rooms, strange chandeliers attached themselves to the hooks of the drawing-room ceiling, regiments of candlesticks, in all the brilliancy of recent plate-leathering, and new wax ornaments appeared on review on the sideboard before an array of argand table-lamps and pint decanters, whilst an accompanying sham fight appeared continually to have being going on between the fire-irons, druggets, broom handles, and stair carpets, all over the house, until the master of the establishment, dinned with such a Babel of sounds, rushed wildly out for the day ; finding in the course of this domestic pantomime, which to him was anything but a comic one, that his own bedroom had been changed into a supper-room. The drawers turned hindmost before, and covered with oil-cloth, looked like decapitated chiffoniers, the four-poster and wash-stand having evaporated altogether ; in fact, not one trace by which the apartment could be recognized, except the little red cord attached to the bell-pull, which originally came through a slit in the tester, and then obstinately asserted its right of occupation. It was on the evening preceding this busy day, when he rushed out

to enjoy a little peace and quietness, that I was seated near his favourite tree reading Coleridge's *Christabel*, a copy of which Sir Walter had kindly lent me for perusal ; for he never seemed to enjoy the full pleasure of any work unless he made others partakers of his delight. It was a beautiful evening, when Sir Walter, as was his custom, seated himself by his favourite ash tree, followed by Maida ; requesting to look at the book I was perusing, he opened it, and occasionally I could hear him repeating snatches of the poem to himself, now aloud, now soft, as he passed on, and few could recite like him. He often asked me to read, to hear what progress I had made, and as he had the whole of that matchless poem in his memory, he returned me the book and bade me proceed. While thus seated beneath his favourite tree I had a full view of his noble countenance, and saw the great Minstrel surrounded by his own heathy mountains and black plantations, while at his feet the river Tweed glided softly on ; and as I proceeded reading, Sir Walter occasionally checked me, by reciting the part, and carrying the continuation many lines beyond where I had read, so perfect was his memory. Nor can I ever forget the beautiful modulations of his voice, now soft, now loud, sonorous or

deep, just as the passage required, or the pathos rose and fell; indeed, he seemed to create an entirely new interest in the poem, as he proceeded, and so much was he excited as the passages led him on, one following another, that he seemed quite forgetful of my presence, until he reached the end of *Christabel*, when he again repeated the lines—

“She was beautiful exceedingly,  
Like a lady from a far *countrée*.”

One of Sir Walter’s “knick-knackeries” was a skull, which was supposed to have belonged to some jovial friar of old Melrose, who

“Wanted neither beef nor ale  
As long as his neighbour’s lasted;”

and many a joke did Sir Walter make about its thickness. When I first saw it, it was placed upon a side table in a little ante-room. I remarked to Sir Walter innocently, that it would make a capital football for the creeshies; at which he, laughing, said, “If you were to roll it down stairs, and the lassies were to see it, they would go stark staring mad, for they have such an horror of the old friar it belonged to, that they will not go any nearer it than they can help.” Upon Sir Walter saying this,

it struck me that I might have a joke by placing my bonnet, which I held in my hand upon it, so when I went out, my head gear could nowhere be found; upon which, I pretended to recollect leaving it upon the table up stairs, when one of the housemaids went up for it; and when she lifted up the bonnet and saw the skull grinning beneath, she raised a scream loud enough to arouse the rest of the remains of the old friar, and came running down stairs, and on being asked what was the matter, all we could get from her was, "that awfu' skull—I do think its come to life!" Sir Walter enjoyed the joke, and laughed heartily, such a laugh as would have done any one's heart good to have heard it. After this, I believe, he occasionally tied his neckerchief around the skull, or placed his nightcap upon it, much to the alarm of the chambermaids when they entered the room. He once talked of having it set with silver, similar to the one Lord Byron had mounted, and which, I believe still remains at Newstead Abbey. But this was never done, and in my opinion, Sir Walter had too much reverence for the dead, ever to make a drinking cup of the remains of a fellow-mortal. Much as he might in poetry, admire the heathen sea-kings, he had no love for their

Valhalla, nor the mead they are said to quaff, in another state of existence, from out the skulls of their enemies.

Sir Walter was a rigid adherer to family worship; and I have no doubt, on my mentioning this, many who have had the happiness to be his guests will recall the beautiful manner in which he read the service of the Church of England; his impressive voice, and his grave aspect, would have done honour to the very highest right reverend that ever shook his head in the pulpit. Baron Bradwardine, at the head of his troop, in *Waverley*, reading the prayers, might, for deportment, be copied as descriptive of the author of *Waverley* engaged in the same duty, within the walls of Abbotsford. Some of the passages in *Isaiah* and *Job*, he read as only a poet could read—making the heart of his hearers thrill again, while they listened to his deep melodious voice; as Shakspeare says of *Perdita*—

“Whatever he did became him.”

The fine feeling of Christian charity which in him was inherent, he extended to the humblest individuals whom he employed, and I shall never forget hearing a poor hedger, named Davidson, speak of Sir Walter's kindness. It appeared

the poor fellow had injured his leg by the fall of a stone, and was unable to follow his employment ; this gave him great concern, as several were dependent on his humble earnings. The Sherra, he said, visited him every day, and besides sending his own surgeon, was constantly supplying him with little delicacies, such as he was unaccustomed to, and at the end of the week, his wages were sent him just the same as if he had been at work ; and the tears streamed down the humble hedger's cheeks, as he added, " An' there were a few shillings ower an' aboon the wages, until I waur able to lift the spade again ; and it waur the way in which he gaed it that went tae the heart, sir, and made a body greet, and feel more than always came to the tongue."

Among the many happy sights I witnessed at Abbotsford, few pleased me more than the assembling of the good folks around the neighbourhood previous to Sir Walter's departure for Edinburgh for the winter season. Both old and young from amid the labouring classes were then present, for there was that freedom and familiarity in the great Minstrel, which at once set aside all distinction and formal coldness, as he entered into the feelings of all around him and made them happy. The



assembly took place in a large barn in which mirth, and dance, and jollity were kept up to a very late hour, the merry jokes of Sir Walter and the music of the bagpipes made all alive, while he, the life and soul of the assembly, had a happy word and an apt anecdote for every little group. Then nothing would do, but "ilka gude man should toast his gude wife," and each "lad his lass," and in the midst of them stood the author of *Waverley*, presiding over a large tub, mixing toddy punch, and while beaker after beaker was emptied, every stir of the toddy called forth some new story, for his presence gave life and vigour to the scene. The great charm of his character was his condescension, that indescribable freeness and affability of manner, which was so plain and so natural and became him so well, that the more you saw of him the more he was endeared to you by his every word and look. It is not to be wondered, that Tom Purdie, faithful Tom! as he was called, should be so fond of his master, for there was a gleam of benevolence so beautifully expressive in his countenance, of kindness towards every person and everything, that his manners and his ways took such rooted possession of the feelings as made you at once happy in his society; there was a

something so indescribably estimable when he spoke, that it riveted the attention and caused you both to respect and admire him, so that any one having once been in the company of Sir Walter Scott, found it was quite impossible ever to forget him. I loved to be with him in the plantations, the impressions then made upon my mind, and the instructions I received, by noticing his every utterance, I have as perfect at this moment as if the scenes had taken place but a week ago, for his kindness towards me was alike and unchanged, and so endeared me to him that I was unhappy if I thought I had ever missed an opportunity when, I might, by just fording the Tweed, have had the pleasure of seeing and speaking to him. I loved to come upon him unawares, and many a run have I had for it, so that I might reach the end of some walk, and so meet him as if by chance, lest he should think I was intruding upon his solitude.

In appearance Sir Walter was rather tall, bony, and broad-shouldered, his complexion was healthy, and his countenance beamed with benevolence. I have many times stood unobserved to admire him, for there was something peculiar about him, that seemed to fill the mind with a pleasing reverence and gentle affection ; he threw an enchantment over every

thing around him, that caused you to look upon the man as a "something" more than even Sir Walter Scott. The author making you love the man for the man's sake.

You could not sit or stand in his presence without watching with breathless interest his every word, look, and smile, and tracing the change until its termination in that downright hearty laugh which he so truly enjoyed, in the whole sense of the word. If any pithy remark was made, it was amusing to watch the lengthening of the upper lip until the mouth on each side appeared convulsed with good humour, then gradually opened and sent forth a merry roar which was enjoyed and taken up by all around ; he seldom opened his mouth but something truly humorous and to the purpose fell from his lips.

I often recall his conversation which was the admiration and delight of all who heard him, the subjects he loved to dilate upon, and which were so suited to the taste of those he addressed ; remember many of the anecdotes which followed each other in such rapid succession, when at times he talked volumes of which we have no record, and in such a manner as aroused the feelings of the listener, until he became absorbed in the subject, and, like remembered

music, conjured back that flow of eloquence long after the voice of the charmer was hushed. It was delightful to be present at his table talk, which flowed with that manliness of intonation so rich, so varied, as each succeeding passage was with softness or energy glowing into a warmth of eloquence so truly natural, and so unstudied, that as it flowed from his lips his countenance seemed to bear the impression of what he was about to utter in its playfully varied expression, and his eyes lighted up from beneath his shaggy brows, which in more serious passages gave fire to his words, for his countenance was elegant in the extreme. He did not look upon things as other men looked upon them, exclaiming, "Ah, it is very pretty," squeezed out with an air of unconcern, even when before them lay bare one of the finest of landscapes the eye of man could look upon, or, "It is but trees after all," or "Umph! it is but bricks and mortar after all." While looking upon some ancient building hoary with time, the history of which might fill a volume, how different was the impression with Sir Walter Scott!

There was scarcely a patch of ground for miles around Abbotsford but what he could relate some anecdote connected with it, not

even the remains of an old wall but what he could give the history of from the earliest foundation. What a literary feast it was to be in company with him alone! it was then, that these rich snatches would burst forth, it was then, if he observed you to be an attentive listener, that his bright grey eyes flashed from beneath the over-hanging brows, and so seized upon the feelings that the mind became riveted upon him, and grew enriched by everything he uttered.

## CHAPTER VII.

THOMAS THE RHYMER — OLD MURRAY THE  
WIZARD—PETER MATHIESON.

THE interest attached to the Eildon hills, handed down by tradition, must associate itself in every mind with the Eildon stone, where stood in days of yore the never-to-be-forgotten tree, under the branches of which Thomas Learmont, commonly called Thomas the Rhymer, sent forth his prophecies, beside the wee bogle burnie that runs rippling along beneath weeping birch and mountain-ash trees. Huntly burn and wood, where the rhymer is supposed to have laid dreaming, when—

“A ferlie he spied wi’ his ee’,”

was one of my favourite haunts, and many a time have I conjured up in imagination the Queen—

“Mounted on her milk-white steed,”

her skirt made of green grass silk, and her mantle of fine velvet, while—

“At ilka tett of her horse’s mane,  
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.”

H

with the rhymer at her back, and she guiding the bridle, until—

“The steed flew faster than the wind.”

And anon, they stopped a little space to watch three ferlies dancing in the narrow road, then on they rode through Elfland, over hill and through rivers, until lost to sight.

What a treat it was to hear Sir Walter, in his deep sonorous voice—which he knew so well how to regulate—awakening the echoes of Huntly burn as he recited the adventures of the Rhymer with the Queen of Elfland, to which realm she carried him, and bound him to her for seven years; when he came back again in the gloaming-like Kilmenny, and with legends, not of earth, charmed his guests in the old tower of Ercildoune. Then to throw in some little touches of his own,—the creation of the moment—a thousand times more poetical than the ballad itself; such as his inimitable addition to the third part of the poem—where the snow-white hart and hind, with gentle eyes, came out of the neighbouring forest, and at the sight of which, true Thomas knew that his time had come, so followed, and in Sir Walter’s own exquisite finish—

“Ne’er in haunts of hoary men,  
Again was Thomas seen.”

Or he would dwell upon the power of the famous wizard, Michael Scott, at whose bidding the Eildon Hills were cleft in three in one night, and left as we see them standing in the present day.

I often visited the ruins of the ancient tower, which is still called the Rhymer's Castle, and stands in the midst of a beautiful haugh, on the east side of the river Leader, near to which it joins the Tweed; and thought how near upon six centuries have elapsed since this ancient bard first chanted his rude rhymes at Ercildoune. True Thomas was a prophet as well as a poet, though it is on record that he only prophesied at second hand, and that a poor nun of Haddington was the real "Simon Pure," as Sir Walter used jokingly to say. I have often thought that the old herbalist Murray, who resided among the ruins of the Rhymer's tower, would have made a splendid character, if the author of Waverley had moulded him into form. Of course the old man had been dead long before my time, though his skill in herbs was still remembered, and the many wonderful cures he effected often formed the subject of conversation by the "bleezing ingle," in the long evenings of winter. Old Murray was also believed to be a



wizard ; he professed to discover stolen property, to recover stray cattle, and he told fortunes. An old farmer, near Galashiels, had a pig stolen from his sty just before New Year's day, and he went to the wizard to endeavour to discover the thief. It was early in the morning, and the seer was still in bed, when a sudden thought came across the countryman, and raising a heavy stone he threw it with all his might at the Wise-man's door, and burst it open, then hurried away and concealed himself. After a time the old farmer came walking up endeavouring to look as innocent as one of his own sheep, and there he saw the wizard half dressed,—storming and raving, and offering, I forget how great a reward if anybody would tell him who had burst open his door. The canny Scot said it “waur a shame,” and such like ; but thought to himself all the while, “if he canna tell wha stived his door, he'll no ken meikle about wha stole the pig.” So he saved his shilling and kept his secret. Old Murray had a musical clock, and an electric machine which were not so common in those days as now ; and what with these and a few snakes and other reptiles, together with a stuffed alligator, he managed as Sir Walter has drily



said, to "live for many years in good credit as a wizard."

Although the wizard of the Rhymer's tower does not figure as a character in any of the Waverley novels, still I think Sir Walter had him in his eye when he drew the Black Dwarf, in spite of the explanation he has been pleased to give us as to the origin of that strange creation. After all old Murray would have afforded him richer materials to have worked up,—the ruined tower—the affinity he claimed to Thomas the Rhymer—his own reputation as a wizard, probably himself believing that he possessed some supernatural power,—his solitary life, and the associations by which he was surrounded, would, in my humble opinion, in the great Minstrel's hands have formed one of the richest characters that he ever drew on his many-coloured canvas.

"But he is dead and gone, lady ;  
He is dead and gone."

And a greater than Thomas the Rhymer was there while Sir Walter existed ; should the spirits of the departed hover around the spots which they loved while in the flesh, it must have been gratifying to the disembodied bard, to have been regarded with such veneration, after a lapse of five centuries, and praised

by such a Minstrel as the Author of "Marmion," in his own Rhymer's glen. No marvel that this glen, haunted with the spirit of poetry, had a strange wild charm for me, as I had more than once heard the Author of Waverley "crooning to himself," as Burns says, in it; he unconscious at the time that any listener was at hand.

The Eildon hills are divided into three conic mountains, and upon the top of the one lying north-east may still be seen the remains of a camp, fortified by two fosses, which stretch around the hill, where we, when boys, gathered "blae berries" which grew up in patches among the heather. I know not how true the supposition may be, but by the ancient villagers it was asserted, that there the blae berries grew more plentifully on account of the many battles that had been fought on the spot, and that they were only to be met with where human blood had been shed; and while gathering them we thought of the Rhymer, and talked of the many combats which that wild scene had witnessed. Ancrum Muir, south of the Eildon hills, where the battle was fought between the Scotch and the English, A.D. 1545, must be familiar to every one at all acquainted with Scottish history. Here stood the stone that

marked the spot where the battle was fought, when Sir Brian Luton and Sir Ralph Ever, led on the English, and Black Angus or Old "Bell-the-Cat" headed the Scots, and completely routed the Southrons. The old stone has been long since removed that marked the grave of the fair maiden Lilliard, and which formerly contained an inscription stating how

"When she found her legs cut off, she fought upon her stumps."

The truth of the tradition appears to be, that when the Scots were almost overpowered by the English, and were about to give way, they were rallied by witnessing the courageous acts of a young female named Lilliard who had followed her lover into battle, and fell fighting bravely by his side, and that the stone was erected to her memory on the spot where she fell. A new stone now marks the place. From these hills you have at once the command of the finest scenery of the surrounding country, and an uninterrupted view of the principal places made mention of in the Monastery; for what intelligent reader has not held communion with the mighty spirit of Sir Walter Scott, and been carried by fancy into the wild scenery which his matchless pen has so faithfully pic-

tured ? On the north side of the middle Eildon hill rests the beautiful grove of Bourgo, overlooking the village of Dingleton, near to which is the renowned Locket Well, that formerly supplied the monastery with water by means of an aqueduct. The west hill is said to have been anciently a volcano. Close to the village of Darnick is the neat habitation of Chiefswood, in the front of which runs Huntly-burn, while higher up on its sloping wooded banks stands the romantic Huntly-burn-house, or Huntlie as it is spelt in the old ballad, from whence it derives its name. Farther up the burn you dive into Huntly-wood, celebrated in song as the Rhymer's Glen, while from the eastern hill, looking towards the north, in the foreground, is the splendid old Abbey of Melrose, that towers above the beautiful valley which dips down to the picturesque river Tweed. The crescent of Dryburgh with the village of Gattonside and the beautiful wire-bridge leading across the Tweed, and Gattonside hills, the peak of Blackhill with Cowdenknows renowned in song, "O the broom," &c. the yellow broom formerly grew so tall there, that the head of mounted horsemen could not be seen above it while riding through the wild bridle-paths; the village of Ercilstone

or Earlstone, supposed to be the birth-place of Thomas the Rhymer, the river Leader with the plantations of Carolside and Lammermuir hills; to the north-east is seen Drygrange-house with its extensive plantations, the village of Newstead and Gladswood's immense rocks, all combined to form a picture unequalled for beauty. To the north-west the village of Darnick and Lord Somervill's pavilion dip down to the river Allan, beyond these rest the hills of Colmsley and Hislop; while to the west is that noted place for the manufactory of broadcloth, Gala-shiels, with its dark, hilly plantations; a little beyond stands the oft-mentioned Torwoodlee house, where the itinerant beggar, the witty Edie Ochiltree, played the laird a game at cards on the window-sill. Further on is Magelt hill, looking on to Jeanie Sharp's moss; then Cauldshiel's loch, and the hills adjoining Abbotsford, with the black heathy mountains of the forest of Selkirkshire. Below the eastern hill lies the village of Bowden, with the town of Hawick in the distance, as if resting upon the bosom of the Liddesdale and Cheviot mountains: Huntly-brae or the Rhymer's Glen ultimately formed part of the estate of Abbotsford.

I have mentioned all these places as spots I loved to ramble over, long before so many

thousands came on pilgrimage to pay homage to the Great Magician, who has peopled them with undying forms, and thrown such a spell over every scene, that the barren moor and the wild waste are hung with the richest flowers of Fairyland.

Sir Walter always told with great gusto the anecdote connected with the flag at Abbotsford, which was planted on a tower erected for the purpose, and which almost led one to conclude that it would not have been struck, had he been on board the vessel at the time, without first exchanging a shot with his Majesty's cruisers.

The old Shipping-Smack Company of Leith, which was very wealthy, and proud of the fame their countryman had won, resolved to honour him by calling one of their finest vessels "The Walter Scott," and when she was launched, she was christened as his namesake. Not to be behindhand in courtesy, Sir Walter in return sent a set of flags, which the commander hoisted on every possible occasion, and much oftener than he ought at times according to strict naval discipline; and so he found out at last, as the sequel shows.

One day as he was riding what the old Scandinavian poets call his "Sea-horse," decked

out in all its finery, he was caught sight of by one of his Majesty's vessels, and was ordered to haul down his colours. This, like a "true British sailor," he refused to do; and bidding the "devil take the hindmost," he crowded every inch of canvas he could carry, and began to walk away over the waves. He had not, however, gone far, before a messenger dropt beside him in the shape of a cannon shot, as if to say, "it had only come to look round a bit;" but, perhaps he thought that another would follow unless he stopped, and might not be quite so courteous, but alight on the deck, whether invited or not. The worthy captain took the hint, hauled down his colours, was boarded, the flag sent to the Lord of the Admiralty with a broad hint given that the "Lord of the Isles" was not the Lord of the British seas, though they acknowledged his Majesty as the King of Minstrelsy, and returned the blue ensign to wave over the towers of Abbotsford—and a tower was built purposely for it.

The following lines, which have never been published, were written upon this flag by a departed friend of Sir Walter's, and I am not aware that any one ever possessed a copy excepting myself.



THE SONG OF THE FLAG.

"Morn rose upon the restless deep,  
The good ship on her way did sweep,  
While billows round her roared ;  
Her white sails bellied to the breeze,  
And while she swept the stormy seas  
High up her pennon soared.

"The king's gun-ship was riding nigh,  
And saw that strange flag sweep the sky,  
'An enemy,' he cried,  
He then the signal gave to clear,  
(The fancied foe was drawing near,)  
Made ready his broadside.

"That ensign was the King of Song's,  
Whose reign will be remembered long,  
As long as time shall last ;  
As long as ever blows the breeze,  
As long as while upon the seas  
A ship doth show its mast.

"Then haul the minstrel's pennon down,  
They cannot lower his renown,  
That will not be forgot ;  
Fame to all time that name will give,  
That ship will rot, but still will live,  
Thy name, Sir Walter Scott."

I remember once trying to drive the history of this flag into the ears of Peter Mathieson, Sir Walter's coachman, who was a deep blue Presbyterian; and also telling him what I thought would have been the result had the

Minstrel himself been on board. "Gudeness befa' us a'," exclaimed Peter, raising his hands and eyes in astonishment as he looked up to the ensign while it streamed out in the morning breeze, "they wadna spill the bluid o' God's creatures about the colour o' a wee bit raggie being blue, or red, or hoddon-grey, mercy on us a'!" and he hove a deep-drawn sigh. Sir Walter, who was himself a religious man at heart, without assuming that serious and outward show which some wear, as if to say, "See how good we are!" had a great respect for Peter, and I have more than once seen the author of *Waverley*, from behind the evergreens that screened the bowling-green, listening to the humble coachman's evening psalms; for Peter never omitted family worship, and as he had a fine deep manly voice, it might have been heard in the early morning, or in the calm of evening when—

"Sweet dewes wept the close of the long Summer's day,"  
sounding far away into the still plantations,  
and recalling pleasantly that immortal picture  
of Burns in his "*Cotter's Saturday Night*,"  
where the old man opens—

"The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride."

Before bidding farewell to Peter, I cannot in

a more becoming place than the present, relate my last interview with the fine hale old fellow, while at Abbotsford so recently as the summer of 1854.

Hearing poor old Peter Mathieson was still alive, I went round towards the stable, and walking into his dwelling, as in days of old, I found the old man sitting by the window, spectacles mounted, reading a newspaper. I went up to him, and holding out my hand, asked him if he knew me. After looking at me, he said, "Weel, I mind the features fine, but I dinna mind yer name." I asked him if he did not remember me at Gala-shiel's school; he replied, "Eh! mon, yer English Geordie, are ye' no'?" When I answered in the affirmative, a thousand recollections of the past seemed to crowd upon the old man's mind in the space of a moment; and taking off his spectacles, and shutting them up in a tin case, and putting them into his pocket, he said, "Eh! mon, I'm right glad tae see ye. Weel, whaed hae thought o't?" We soon fell into gossiping of the past, and looking through the window of his domicile, Peter said, "The place is meikle altered since ye were here, ye'd scarce kenn't again;" and pointing to some elm-trees in front of the stables, he said, "These trees Sir Walter planted

wi' his ain hand, they hae grown brawley since yon time ye mind, they mak' a fine shelter, and hide the stables frae the house."

As you enter Peter's apartments, on the left hand are three rows of shelves, beneath which a dresser runs nearly up to the window, that faces the room door. Here, in the space betwixt the dresser and the window, Peter sat reading when I entered; next the window a fireplace, and beyond that two beds the whole depth of the room with a partition betwixt; further round towards the door, and facing the fireplace, stood a mahogany chest of drawers; and in the middle of the room a round table; the floor was stone. I asked Peter if it was not cold in the winter; he said, "Na, its no' that cauld, only when Tweed, in the winter time just gets by and walks in here, its damp for weeks after. The place waur first built for stabling, but Sir Walter just then couldna' spare ony mair ground to build a cottage, an' the stables being bigger than he wanted, he just turned this part into a house, an' I've lived in it ever since I cam frae Athestiels here. Sir Walter asked me, whether I'd hae the floor stane or timber, an' I said I thought I should like it stane, sae ye see that's how it came to be sae."

Poor old Peter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SCHOOLDAYS AT GALASHIELS.

"THE mother of mischief," says an old proverb "is no bigger than a midge's wing," and not much larger was the incident of "barring out," a custom still practised in the schools throughout Scotland on St. Thomas's (the shortest) day, and from which resulted what I shall now relate.

A letter signed by the boys in a Round-Robin fashion, asking a holiday, was on this occasion placed on the master's desk, when the wishes of the boys not being acceded to, the evening was passed in arranging plans for the morning. With the echo of Chanticleer the schoolroom windows were fastened down, and the door locked, then we were off to the woods; a handful of oatmeal and a drink from a clear brook were not to be despised when exposed to the bleak air around Galashiels, and we provided ourselves accordingly. Here might be seen a little group kindling a fire, and boiling in a rusty tin pot (picked up by the way,) the eggs

we had purchased at Mr. Balantyne's Mosseley farm, at the foot of Magelt hill,—there two or three lying full length upon the greensward drinking from a spring, while some were climbing trees, and a few racing and pelting one another with fir cones, our hearts meantime buoyant as a bird's that soars and sings from the very pleasure reigning in its own breast.

Strange that the love of mischief should predominate over the remembrance of many a previous flogging, and that although the coming "smart threw its shadow before" yet in spite of former pangs and the sure certainty of a repetition, we left the future to provide for itself, conscious that twelve months had broadened our backs, and that we could all the better endure the penalty to be paid for another "barring out." But every day brings its returning night, and although the most daring amongst us were armed for the worst, yet the hearts of the little ones sunk within them as they drew nearer home, for our pedagogue was not a man to throw a chance away; like Shylock, he would have "his pound of flesh," neither would he allow a stout jacket and a pair of good thick corderoys to stand betwixt him and his reckoning. The time he chose for the attack was when we were the least prepared,

namely, when we were tucked up as we thought, to be forthcoming without blot or blemish, under the blankets, snugly for the night, like pigeons reposing under the coverlet of a crust. We had displayed the spirit of opposition twelve months before, and he no doubt felt certain there would be no falling off in this spirited determination to "suffer and endure," therefore contenting himself with only threatening. the smaller boys, he chose to punish us by proxy, and sent up the teachers to "lay on, Macduff."

.Reader, picture to yourself the scene, some half asleep, others dreaming, and in imagination again wandering over the scenes which we had that day visited, when lo! without either sound of trumpet or any other announcement beyond the opening of the door, we were startled out of our sleep by a whack and a thump, and "tak' that, Sir, an' run awa' again," until all of us were fairly aroused, and up we jumped like soldiers who, startled at midnight, find the enemy unaware in the camp. We seized the first weapons that came to hand, and lost no time in returning "blow for blow," there stood one of our companions waging war on the enemy with his corderoys in his hand, another had taken the bolster and felled the

foeman. They retreated, roaring out a thousand murders, as we, armed with our trousers, the pockets of which contained all kinds of heavy things picked up in our rambles among the woods, such as curious shapen stones, and hard dry fir cones, rattled them about their ears as they hurried down stairs without standing on the order of their going. It was another war with the breeks, and when Sir Walter heard of it he laughed heartily, and said it recalled "Green Breeks" with whom he battled in his boyish days. Many a hearty roar had it caused in the halls of Abbotsford, when he recounted to his guests the battle of the breeks, and he used to say, "Ut, lads, an' had ye been Hielanders, ye wadna hae had the weapons to hae fought wi'." But upon this occasion, we had some sturdy self-willed boys amongst us, who, from the previous night's flogging, awoke with revengeful spirits, and after consulting together, determined to bar the school-room door, and remain in the school so that all would alike be blamed. Accordingly, breakfast was no sooner over than we went into the school-room and pulled down the window-blinds which looked into the garden. There was only one small window in the front of the school, and this we whitened; the teachers came up at



nine o'clock, and finding the door fast, went into the house; meantime the master inquired for the key which was always hung behind the kitchen door, the cook said it was taken away at the usual time. Their suspicion was at length aroused by the front window being whitened, and they at last concluded we were off to the woods again. One of the boys, a little more devil-may-care than the rest, laughed loud enough to create some fear lest he should be heard, when one of his companions, forcing his way amid the group, gave him a "cuff o' the lug;" a mutiny at once broke out among the rebels which drew the attention of the master, who came and insisted upon our opening the door, but in vain; we all stuck to our purpose of keeping him where he was so long as we could. His patience at length became exhausted, and he sent off for "Dugal Mitchell," the burly blacksmith whom Sir Walter had tried and Hamlet had before punished, to come and force the lock. This order struck a panic among us, knowing the grudge Vulcan bore; but, as necessity is the mother of invention, we stretched the form across the school-room against the door. At length the blacksmith came, and with his big hammer made a blow at the door which yielded a little at the top, but the forms

were too great a stronghold to allow of its opening. A round of cheers so annoyed the smith that he went to work another way, and going backward into the garden, pushed his hammer, as Hamlet had done his head, through one of the windows, undid the fastening, threw up the window, and, tumbling in headlong, alighting on the top of one of the desks. Some made to the door to escape, others set to upon Dugal Mitchell, whom we finally ejected, in spite of his bulk, the way he came, and he might as well have looked for peace had he tumbled into a wasp's nest as where he was ; after pummeling him heartily we left him struggling beneath a large evergreen. The master, seeing we were determined to carry our object, offered us, through one of the teachers, a holiday for the day, and a free pardon for our offences ; an agreeable armistice readily accepted, the door was opened, peace once more restored, and the school vacated for a second day's ramble in the woods. But it was only occasionally that we indulged in these " harum skarum " tricks.

It may be interesting to the youth of the present day to know something of the more sober system followed at the school of Galashiels more than a quarter of a century ago. Sir Walter was a regular visitor on the examination

day at our school, when the parents of the boarders were invited, though, through mine living in London, I had but little chance of seeing them. After the classes were all heard, three or four delivered a recitation in English; and upon one occasion I "spouted" Sir Robert Walpole's celebrated speech on "Standing Armies," and in such a satisfactory manner as made Sir Walter, who was one of the examiners, exclaim, "Weel done, Geordie," in a hearty and approving voice, and causing his staff to visit my back good naturedly as he bade me approach him; it was an honour which even those who had their fathers and mothers around them would have been proud of. When the prizes that were awarded were distributed, I had the pleasure to have placed across my shoulders a purple ribbon with a silver medal attached, by the hands of Sir Walter Scott.

It was the custom to rise at seven, and breakfast at eight in a large room on the ground floor, the upper floor was used as sleeping rooms, separated from the master's house by the play-ground; and at that hour an immense kettle filled with porridge, something in the shape of a glue-pot, was drawn into the room upon a carriage with four wheels, by a barefooted wench from the kitchen, and

the porridge was served out upon deep soup-plates to all who were seated round the table; milk or butter was also served to such as preferred it; none were stinted; if any little "Oliver" asked for more, he had it. School commenced at nine and was over at twelve; at one the bell rang for dinner which was served in the same long room, where Scotch kail was waiting ready for each. Mr. Fyshe, the master, took the head of the table; and his better half the bottom, the two teachers sat facing one another in the middle, a good joint was placed at each end; Mr. and Mrs. Fyshe attended upon us, then dined afterwards in the house. At two school again commenced, and at five the bell rang for tea, which was served with milk and bannock (peasbread) buttered. On Sunday we had tea, and occasionally made sad havoc with the sugar basin if it were left by chance; at eight the bell again rang for supper, which consisted of porridge the same as breakfast, and at nine we went to bed. On Saturdays we had a half holiday, when it was customary to walk to the banks of the Tweed accompanied by our teachers; and one day, while thus engaged, we saw Tom Purdie sauntering along the banks with a leister in his hand (which he could handle as well as the axe), now and then

stooping down and feeling under the shelves of the bank for salmon. We had been watching the old man for some time, until at length, just against the ford, we saw him go down on his knees, and it was evident from his caution that he felt a fish; he raised himself up and suddenly darted the leister at the spot, but either the water was deeper, or the salmon stronger than he anticipated, for when struck it gave a sudden plunge and splash which threw the old man head foremost into the river, to the amusement of us all. But nothing daunted, Tom again laid hold of the leister, the handle of which appeared just above the water, and swimming to the shore with one hand, raised his victim into mid-air and placed it upon the greensward, whilst we, cap in hand, saluted him with hearty cheers which he acknowledged, and looked, while doing so, as proud as if he had been the Laird of Abbotsford. There is fine salmon and trout fishing in the Tweed, and it afforded us much amusement to watch the variety of ways which is pursued, such as "burning the water," or leistering by torch-light, the latter rather a hazardous system and a little too much of a wholesale way of taking the fish, though affording excellent sport. Some six men go out in a small boat, others

also wade with torches and leisters in their hands, when the salmon, attracted by the light, come round the boat, the leister is then darted down and the fish pinioned; but the salmon thus caught are not so marketable as those captured by net or hook, as by the former method they are disfigured and torn by the leister. From Gala scaur I have seen the river Gala, which threads its way into the Tweed just below most brilliantly illuminated at night as the merry fishermen were enjoying the sport, into the spirit of which none entered more heartily than Sir Walter Scott.

Our school was the last house but one on the Abbotsford road; the playground formed a square, entered by a pair of large gates; while on the left a blank wall looked into a ploughed field belonging to the "manse;" and to the right were two houses which occupied the whole length of the playground; the one next the gate was used as a laundry and bakehouse; the other on the ground floor, was used as a dining room, while the upper parts of both houses were occupied as bed rooms. Across the playground stood the master's house, with its little white harled portico entrance; to the right of this a blank white-harled wall looking into small gardens, and betwixt this and the house there

is an outlet into the road ; the first door is the kitchen of the house, and a little beyond the portico of the schoolroom. Returning to the playground, and passing by the portico entrance to the house, you enter the garden by a small gate in the wall, on the right, against the gable end of the house, spreads a fine old pear tree, on the left, a pump ; beyond the garden a field, belonging to Mr. Craig, who then managed a branch bank ; overhanging this a hilly field belonging to our schoolmaster, and called "Fyshes Field," capped by the Upper Plantation, and separated from Mr. Craig's, by Gala road, winding away into the fields and plantations, in these two fields evening found us playing golf, shinty, handball, football, &c. ; In Fyshes field the Dissenters held annual tent preachings in the hollow close by the dyke, the audience sitting and dotting the scene with their many-coloured dresses, like Covenanters of other days, upon the brow of the hill above, looking down upon the minister. In the hollow a sturdy lime-tree, surrounded by four young ash-trees, marks the spot where the preachers pitched their tent. The hills in Scotland are very stony, and I recollect well how my less thoughtful companions amused themselves occasionally by rolling stones past

the village girls who sat beneath. If we listened ever so attentively to the preaching, we could scarcely hear a word of the sermon, nor anything from below but a kind of murmuring which in sound resembled the low wind.

Many a time have I recalled that scene since those days, as it reminded me of that beautiful description in Grahame's "Sabbath," a poem to which Sir Walter Scott makes frequent allusion, especially to the passage I quote below, and which would not disgrace the pen of the author of "Marmion." It is as follows :—

Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,  
O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreamy wastes, they sought  
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,  
Disport to different seas. Fast by such brooks  
A little glen is scoop'd, a plat  
With green sward gay, and flowers that strangers seem  
Amid the heathery wild, that all around  
Fatigues the eye : in solitudes like these,  
Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foiled  
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws.  
There leaning on his spear (one of the array,  
That in the times of old had scathed the rose  
On England's banner, and had powerless struck  
Th' infatuate monarch and his wavering host,  
Yet ranged itself to aid his son dethroned)  
The lyart veteran heard the word of God,



By CAMERON thundered, or by RENWICK poured  
 In gentle streams; then rose the song, the loud  
 Acclaims of praise; the wheeling plover ceased  
 Her plaint, the solitary place was glad,  
 And on the distant cairn the watcher's ear  
 Caught doubtfully at times the "breeze-borne note."

This is splendid painting. What can be finer than the old soldier leaning on his spear and listening to the sermon? that spear which had struck through the rose on England's banner; then the lapwing ceasing her cry as the solemn hymn arose, and the sentinels watching on the distant cairns, or on the surrounding rocks, and fancying that they heard in the "breeze-borne note" sounds of the enemy's approach — bloody Claverhouse spurring up

"Fiery red with speed."

Such pictures as these sometimes passed before the eye of my memory, while seated on that hill-side, down which my less thoughtful companions were rolling stones on the assembled multitude below. James Grahame was one of Sir Walter's early friends, and the author of 'Waverley' at one time took a delight in plaguing him, by speaking highly of DUNDEE and running down the Covenanters. He died in the county of Durham, at the age of forty-seven.

## CHAPTER IX.

## GALASHIELS.

GALASHIELS, as all know who have visited that part of Scotland, lies about two miles from Abbotsford, and is beautifully situated on the banks of the Gala surrounded by the Upper Plantation, Magelt Hill, Bruce's hills, Buckholm hill, and Williamlaugh hill, while near at hand rises Torwoodlee House, belted with its dusky plantations, places celebrated far and wide as the spot where the Abbotsford hunters annually threw off. And well was the locality adapted both for sheltering the beast of the chase, and also for trying what metal the sportsmen were made of, being studded with spear-pointed whin-bushes, which in many places grew close together, and covered numberless acres of ground. Well do I remember the scene when Reynard made for the thickly-woven covert on Bruce's hill, the "hark forward" echoing from hill to hill, as they endeavoured to turn his course if he gained upon the whins; the dogs running in and bounding from place to place, as they dotted the hills in every direction; while here a

hound and there a scarlet coat broke the landscape; and further on were sportsmen seen making a short cut to where they fancied the fox would next appear; and ever amid the merry cavalcade might be heard the view-halo of Sir Walter above all other voices, the instant that Reynard had again broken cover.

Galashiels, partly in Selkirk and partly in Roxburgh, is divided into two parts by a brae, called "Bow Butts," and designated by the the "Old" and "New" Town; our school was situated in the Old Town, which about sixty years ago was only a small village. On the right hand, before entering the road leading to the baronial mansion, Gala House, the square piece of ground now built upon, with gardens in front, is where the cross formerly stood, and at the back of it, the old Tolbooth, which is now enclosed by a wall, although its tall square belfry is all that remains, and from it the merry bells still ring out, as they did in the days of old, on high days and holidays to call the people together. Two or three of the original houses are still standing, and against one thrust in a corner, is a pump of beautiful clear water, which in our school-days, we often caused to "shake its loosened silver in the sun."

A few weavers occupied, and carried on a species of manufacture of a course woollen cloth in these days called "Galashiels Gray," the wool being the produce of the flocks that fed on the surrounding hills. By degrees, however, the demand for the material so increased, that mills were built in the valley, through which the river Gala flows, and a new town sprung up, which has increased more within the last few years than it has ever before done, during a long half century. Even that part called Bow Butts, which was green fields in my boyish days, is now covered with mills five times the size of those that were formerly built from the same whinstone which is so plentiful in the neighbourhood; and a noble appearance they have rearing their heads on high with the windows and corners dotted with free stone. The tall chimneys tell that several are now worked by steam power.

With weavers, as with others, "time works wonders," and great has been the improvement in the articles manufactured here. The old "Galashiels Gray" is supplanted by a finer quality of shawl, of exquisite texture, and brilliant in its diversified colours. Tweeds, tartans, &c., which rival the rainbow in hues, and the wool of which is now imported from

Australia, and when brought hither is corded, spun, dyed, and woven into these rich materials.

The increasing business of the town has quite enfeebled the river Gala, which has become so exhausted, through combating with the many mill-wheels, as to almost have given up the contest in very despair, now drawing its remains along in perfect feebleness, having been so dammed, turned, and twisted in later years for the manufacturers' convenience.

How different from the time when it flowed along in its ancient strength, overrun its banks, and flooded, and made the inhabitants run to the tune of "Sour plums at Galashiels" as fast as ever their forefathers did the English soldiers whom they dispersed and slaughtered while gathering *sour green fruits*, and from which incident they conferred upon themselves the soubriquet of "Sour plums of Galashiels." Their armorial bearings have since been a fox and a plum-tree, which, as Sir Walter used to say, "Showed in what a stealthy way they won the victory, though after all it perhaps signified that they invited the southerners to a feast of green plums and killed them, which was very foxy on the part of Auld Galashiels."

The upper part has a village kind of look, while the lower part is stamped with the

manufacturing air already described, and not unworthy of its appellation the "Town." Many of the workmen are nicknamed "Creeshies," and some of them look as if they were born blue, or had been fed on indigo from their cradle, so much are they discoloured by their occupation of dyeing cloth; there you will find little children labouring like slaves, and as to the natural colour of their complexion, you would almost doubt whether it would ever be seen again after they once had entered the manufactories. Our school, which stood close beside the road leading to Abbotsford, was the last house in the village, with the exception of the "Manse;" near it also stood the burial-ground, the dead now occupying the site of the former ancient Kirk; the aisle being all that is left of the former place of worship; the new Kirk stands lower down in the village. The remains of Mungo Park, the celebrated African traveller, born at Foulshields, near Newark, lie buried in the old kirk yard.

A little beyond Galashiels on the Tweed road leading to the ford, crossing to Abbotsford, on the left, separated by a field, is Gala *scaur*, looking down on the river Gala, the recognized slaughter-house for horses past labour. When useless and old they were taken

to this spot, stabbed in the chest, and hurled over to become food for the ravens, which, emerging from the covert close by, hovered in great numbers around. Gala scaur is now planted with a row of beautiful trees.

Early in October the election of Convener and Deacon took place for the ensuing year, upon which occasion it was customary for Mr. Thompson, a weaver of Galashiels, to address an invitation to Sir Walter Scott in verse, and many of the boys in our school used to try their skill in rhyme on this occasion, and no doubt considered their own doggerel was as good as that of the Galashiels poet. It was a mirthful and a happy day, and one in which we rejoiced in a holiday; for the whole of the boarders in our school, numbering about sixty, walked in all their holiday attire, two abreast, in the procession as it proceeded to the Tweed, headed by many of the most respectable townspeople, to meet Sir Walter and his family at the Ford, and escort them into Galashiels. Numbers of the Creeshies, with their indigo-dyed faces, and dark purple fingers, wearing the appearance of their having put on blue gloves for the occasion, were also present, and all moved merrily in marching order, to the drone of the bagpipes, under the superin-

tendence of John of Skye. The newly-elected Deacon and Convener, with some of the most influential men of the place, preceded Sir Walter's carriage from the Tweed in a glass coach. Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd also usually accompanied the Sheriff upon these occasions, and a grand sight we thought it, to see the banners waving, and to hear the music sounding, while the very hills around echoed back the mirthful voices which deepened as the increased numbers joined the procession. Upon entering *Ganderscleuch*, as we now call Galashiels, the auld wives and young bairns came trotting out to greet the great Poet, and happy was he at this enthusiastic, heart-stirring reception; for he was as susceptible as a child of kindness, and right proud were the good folk of Galashiels to welcome him, for had he not countenanced the festival, all would have passed off in form and silence; whereas his presence gave life to the whole village, and made a real happy holiday. Had he stopped to gossip with every auld wife with whom he was acquainted, and who was wont, on less public occasions, to "hae a bit chat wi' the Sherra," I know not how long we should have been passing through the village of Galashiels to the inn, which was situate in the lower part of the town, for every



soul was out, and every eye delighted to look upon the cheerful countenance of Sir Walter Scott. It was a great day for weaver Thompson, who rejoiced in the appellation of the "Galashiels poet," and who spoke of Sir Walter as his "brother bard," though what the great Magician thought of the relationship could only be inferred from the merry twinkle of his deep-set eyes.

In Galashiels there lived at this time two remarkable personages, the one named Tibby Beattie, the other Jean M'Intosh, and each of these women had a daft son, and such were, I am sorry to say, in those days, too often objects of diversion instead of pity. Tibby obtained a livelihood by selling keel, or red chalk, which was conveyed from place to place by means of a stout donkey, under the superintendence of her son, who was nicknamed Daft Keely Beattie. He was not so imbecile, but that he could manage to convey the keel to his customers, though he had a wild, unsettled; and irregular expression in his countenance; still, taken altogether, his features were rather handsome, for a "puir simpleton." The mother of Daft Davie was a tall, thin, raw-boned woman, who acted as midwife to the neighbouring poor, and was rather too partial to the native dew,

especially of a cold night—and in her opinion the thermometer was very frequently at zero, judging from the awkwardness of her gait, and the eccentricity of her manner.

Her son Davie, better known as Daft Davie, inherited the general appearance of his mother, being rather tall and bony, with a countenance exceedingly idiotic and simple. Davie occasionally got employment from the farmers, in mucking out biers or running errands; he also received great kindness from the minister at the Manse, and might frequently be seen in the rickyard, assisting in driving the team, at harvest-time. These two poor simpletons were very partial to each other's company for a time, until at last Davie, from some cause or another, took a dislike to his daft companion. Tibby was in the habit of tethering her donkey in the Bow Butts, to feed upon the rough wild grass and numerous thistles which grew there, and which was entered by a narrow pathway at the side of the old Kirkyard, looking down to the Gala, while beyond arose the furze-clad Bruce's hill, intersected by the Jedburgh road. Keely occasionally carried out his chalk in a little roughly-made cart, and sometimes in hampers hanging suspended upon each side of the donkey. On one occasion the little cart stood before the

door of Tibby's cottage, while Tibby herself went to fetch the donkey, when to her astonishment it was missing, and looking in the direction of the valley beneath the Bow Butts, she saw some twenty boys urging on the poor cuddy to his utmost speed, while on his back was mounted Daft Davie. On seeing this Tibby came hurrying down the brae to the rescue of her poor beast, who no sooner saw its owner, than it made towards her, bearing its rider at once into the arms of his Amazonian enemy. But fortitude flew to Davie's assistance, and he dismounted, or threw himself off on the opposite side, just as Tibby made a grasp at him ; but in her intensity to seize her victim, she fell headlong among a bed of nettles, which gave poor Davie time to escape, when clapping his hands together he raised an hysterical laugh and ran off. Shortly after this Keely, while crossing the Tweed at the ford, during a flood, seated upon his donkey, was carried down by the stream, and drowned directly opposite Abbotsford. When Sir Walter heard of the accident he hastened out to see the remains of poor Keely and to hear the correctness of the statement, saying, "Puir body, he shouldna hae been trusted to cross the Tweed." He immediately ordered a cart to convey the corpse home, and administered to the wants of

Tibby Beattie. Sir Walter had him buried in the old Kirkyard, where may now be seen a small stone which marks his resting-place and upon it the words, "Here lies Daft Keely Beattie, of Galashiels." It may appear strange to some persons, that the mind of so great a simpleton and idiot should show symptoms of feeling upon such an occasion, but at the grave-side of Keely Beattie was seen the person of Daft Davie on the day of the funeral, and he, poor fellow, regularly visited the spot daily for some time afterwards to look upon the grave of his departed friend. I have often wondered whether the author of *Waverley* had either of these poor idiots in his mind when he drew Daft Davie Gellatley. I never read the description without thinking of Keely Beattie and the snatches of wild songs he was always singing to himself, besides his fondness for dogs. I do not know whether this has ever struck any other person who may have seen this poor idiot.

It had been for years the custom on the first Monday after Fostern's e'en, to play a game at hand-ball betwixt Selkirk and Galashiels, although the village and the town of Galashiels were not always upon the most friendly terms, for the Galashiels men never lost an opportunity of throwing the bunch of hogs' bristles into the

teeth of the sutors of Selkirk. It may not, however, be generally known, that the principal trade of Selkirk at one time was the manufacturing of single-soled shoes; that the hogs' bristles are connected with the freedom of the old town of Selkirk, and that it was a custom for every burghess to draw the hogs' bristles through his teeth when he took up his freedom. To be made a sutor of Selkirk is the ordinary phrase for being created a burghess, a hog's bristle is always attached to the seal.

To bid a Selkirker "go lick the birse" is pretty sure to get, what the Yankees call, "his dander riz." This "BIRSE," or bunch of bristles gave rise to one of Sir Walter's most humorous epistles. It appears that the Duke of Buccleuch was desirous of presenting the sutors of Selkirk with a silver cup, which among other ornaments was to be decorated with the far-famed "birse." But how to arrange it was a difficult matter, which could not be got over without applying to Sir Walter. The difficulty called forth the following most amusing and characteristic letter:—"The cup will be a very handsome one, but I am still puzzled what to do with the birse; it is a most unmanageable decoration. I tried it upright on the top of the cup; it looked like a shaving-brush; and

the goblet might be intended to make the lather. Then I thought I had a brilliant idea. The arms of Selkirk are a female seated on a sarcophagus, decorated with the arms of Scotland, which will make a beautiful top to the cup ; so I thought of putting the birse into the lady's other hand ; but, alas ! it looked so precisely like a rod of chastisement uplifted over the poor child, that I laughed at the drawing for half an hour. Next I tried to take off the castigatory appearance by inserting the bristles in a kind of handle ; but then it looked as if the poor woman had been engaged in the capacities of housemaid and child-keeper at once, and fatigued with her double duty, had sat down on the wine-cooler, with the broom in one hand, and the bairn in the other."

The "birse," however, was made poetical at last, by being placed in a thistle, which rose up above the "poor woman and the bairn," and never before nor since was a bunch of hogs' bristles placed in such a picturesque and poetical a position as by the great Minstrel.

Upon this annual occasion of handball our school always lent its aid, for we had no notion of the Selkirk chieftains beating the

"Braw, braw, lads o' Gala Water."

And so much interest was taken in this game by the neighbouring gentry, that pleasure, and

not business, became the order of the day; for the factories were all closed, and the country people came up for miles around to witness this old holiday game; and peering above the crowd rose the high head of Sir Walter Scott himself; and wherever he stood there were the *élite* assembled; every body seemed anxious to get near him, for nowhere around did "laughter ring" with so merry a sound, telling how genuine were the flashes of wit which created it, as where the author of "Marmion" stood. At one o'clock the church bells rang merrily, while the old Tolbooth bell tolled out, and you could see by the countenances of both youth and age, rich and poor, that they had made up their minds for a holiday. Sweethearts, wives, and children were seen coming from the neighbouring villages in numbers—some to join in, and others to witness, the day's sport—giving to many a long winding and straggling line of road, a cheering and animating appearance, varied by costumes of all hues; and where you saw, as the poet Samuel Rogers has beautifully expressed it—

"Black hoods and scarlet crossing hill and dale."

The spot where the game was played stood midway betwixt Selkirk and Galashiels, on a plot of ground of several acres, called "Jeanie

Sharp's Moss." The lone cottage stands upon the moor, but where is Jeanie, little fortune-telling Jeanie? She, too, is long since dead.

The game commenced by the ball being thrown up from the centre of the ground, and this was the signal that set the whole mass of the contending players in motion; it was no easy matter to catch the ball while falling, although ambition prompted every player to be the first to make off with it. From amid the matted crowd of persons that were huddled together, and ever swayed, heavily to and fro, while the shout of "run, run," was heard on every side, and before the opposing parties could be separated, or even look around them, the ball was often conveyed, you could scarcely tell how, amid the confusion, to some distance, and was soon followed by the outstanding scouts who had not mingled in the outset with the staggering mass.

Well and gallantly was the game contested, until at length, the one who had borne off the ball was overtaken, and again compelled to throw it from him: away they started once more, and brought it back some yards from beyond where it was first thrown up, while all was stir, and tumult, and anxious struggling; each party calling out to their own side to



“run, run,” until the group became huddled together in a mass, and in the confusion it was difficult for the lookers-on to tell to which party the contending heroes belonged. Many a loud huzzah was heard, while each heart seemed lighted up, and every face looked for encouragement on the countenance of Sir Walter Scott, who sometimes on foot and sometimes mounted on his celebrated pony, Sybil Grey, with his favourite dogs, Pepper and Mustard, by his side, looked, with his deep-sunken and grey-laughing eye upon the scene, now and then calling out in merry derision, “Weel done, Souters o’ Selkirk,” or “Hurrah, my brave lads o’ Gala water!” Every now and then you could hear the deep hearty laugh as he urged his pony onward, or followed on foot the success of the game, watching with as much apparent anxiety, as the most interested player in the group, the course of the ball, as it was bandied backwards and forwards by the players, while he occasionally stopped to crack a joke with some sonsie lassie, whose sweetheart he knew was at the head of the contending parties; then off again he would start in the direction which the ball took, and you might tell, without watching his tall figure, and only looking at the winding lines of smiling faces

which marked his course, that he whose merest word was felt to be an honour by the party to whom it was addressed was there.

On the competitors went, reeling over the ground while surrounding him who had possession of the ball, and whose arms they often pinioned, so that he could not throw it from him ; and ever amid the thickest of the throng was heard that well-known and encouraging voice, exclaiming, "Weel done, Gala," or "Weel done, Selkirk," just on whichever side the success happened to be ; so was the game and the merry excitement kept up for hours, the ball very often being carried some distance by one party, then borne back again by the other, until those who first reached "hale," the given boundary, were proclaimed the winners of the game ; then it was that hundreds of persons might be seen crowding around Sir Walter, to hear his opinion of the contest, each one elbowing in to "hae a bit chat wi' the Sherra," who was beloved by old and young. Nor was the great Minstrel himself above giving the ball a lift if it happened to come in the same direction as where he stood ; and then the shouts resounded, and all .

"Went merry as a marriage bell."

I often thought as I looked at the joyous

twinkle of the poet's eye, that only the appearance of the thing, and the high estimation in which he was held, prevented him from participating in the game, for he ever seemed to have the animal spirits of boyhood, and when he saw others happy and joyful about him he always seemed to me as if it would have added to his delight to have joined in the merriment.

Those who know his quick penetration of character, his inimitable manner of "drawing a person out," as it is commonly expressed, cannot even for a moment doubt that amid such pleasant recreations as these, he unconsciously found the rich materials which gave such a living truthfulness to the characters he afterwards drew. Nothing seemed lost upon him; he was alive to every little remark; and often, in a delicate manner which was his own alone, he would clothe the ideas which his gossip gave utterance to, in such a new and familiar form, that the latter could not help exclaiming, "That is it, Sherra, but said just like yer ainsel."

Merry days were those for both the old and the young of Galashiels, for never did he appear but his good-natured and pleasing countenance made all happy that it beamed upon.

## CHAPTER X.

## RAMBLES ROUND ABBOTSFORD.

I HAVE many times marked the proud banner that formerly waved over the marble portico of Buckingham Palace (now removed to Hyde Park), announcing to every beholder that England's beloved Sovereign, Queen Victoria, was then within those walls. But that banner awakened in me other thoughts, it carried my mind back to Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott, to schooldays spent amid scenery which he has made immortal, and to his own banner seen across the Tweed, waving from its unpretending tower, and telling to the country far and wide that the great Wonder-Worker was at home, and that within those walls he was again weaving his enchanting spells which have and will bewitch the world, past, present, and to come. Such thoughts have passed in my mind when strolling by the window, where I imagined Sir Walter at his studies, while I rambled in the plantations around Abbotsford House with a favourite companion, rehearsing some familiar song in the solitude of the trees, unseen but by the birds that warbled their "wood notes wild"

as we passed by. There was no ambition then, no aiming at great things; no! it was happiness in the quietude and in the silent woods, a flow of friendship scarcely to be accounted for, but the feelings are never so sensible as while at school, neither did we then exclaim

“How can chant, ye little birds,  
While I so weary, fu’ o’ care.”

for Care was a stranger. Perched upon the same bough some bird was singing to cheer its mate, who, in the next tree or bush, was carefully sitting over her brood, listening to the song of her companion, while peeping from the threshold of her little home, as if in recognition as we passed along. Beautiful did Abbotsford look from the north bank of the Tweed with its gallery extending from end to end to end supported by iron pillars; its pinnacled and Gothic roof thrown on the foreground, while far behind rose the Eildon hills, up whose sides crept many a tall fringe of woods; while on the edge of the river, at the base of the Abbotsford hills, stretched sweet slopes of greensward, broken by clumps of trees, and dotted with cattle, retreating here, and projecting there, in all those beautiful indentations which give such loveliness to a landscape.

Nor was the scene without its sounds; the lowing of cattle, mingled with the bleating of sheep; the singing of the birds, the dreamy motion of the trees, and the murmur of the river, all blended in sweet harmony, and gave a voice to the scenery. Beautiful terrace walks have now taken the place of many of the old trees that formerly grew there.

During one of our rambles we visited a dark fir tree, in which a crow had for years built its nest and brought forth its young; but a hawk had turned out this old inhabitant, thrown its eggs upon the ground, with no more remorse than a bailiff feels in ejecting a tenant, and taking possession of the nest. The hawk, in turn, was ejected by a magpie, who built a roof to this old building. And now, to our surprise, after climbing up to the nest, we were startled by a squirrel leaping out, and at one spring making his escape upon a neighbouring tree, and, peeping through the hole, I perceived the twinkling bright eyes of another squirrel, and immediately stopped up the aperture with my handkerchief, and, taking out my pocket knife, cut off the branch, which I brought away with the nest and imprisoned squirrel. Such little incidents as these always interested Sir Walter Scott, and he never failed in making inquiries

into the full particulars of all matters connected with natural history, for, although a branch of knowledge in which he has not made much display, few men understood or were greater lovers of nature than the Author of "Waverley."

Besides the play-ground, we were allowed to ramble wherever we pleased, until the ringing of a bell called us to meals, to school, and to bed, which, from its loud tone, was heard at a considerable distance; thus the Allan water, Gala water, Tweed, Abbotsford, and Fairy Dean, Eildon, and the Rhymer's Glen, and Magelt hills, were, in their turns, our favourite resorts. Below the lower plantation, and at the foot of Magelt hill, there is a sheet of water called the "Curling-pond," used by the gentry in the winter; the curling-stones are kept in a wood-built shed on the pond bank. On the brow of the hill stands Mossilee farm overhung by a dark plantation, then occupied by Mr. Ballentyne. In the small plantation on the crown of the hill, there is a large stone with the imprint of a man's hand, and the words "Wallace's putting stone," chiselled in tolerably legible letters upon it; traditionally it is said, that Wallace found this stone on Eildon hill and putted it to Magelt. "Puttng" is a favourite pastime in Scotland. From Mossilee

Farm-house, along the face of the hill, may be traced the remains of an ancient road known as the "Catrail," leading South, past Jeanie Sharp's Moss to an old Roman camp on Rink hill, and is supposed to be one of a chain of forts extending to the Cumberland mountains. The fortification stands on an eminence, buried amid trees, it has been strongly defended by three distinct ramparts of stone with a deep moat around it, and immense earthen bulwarks; from Rink fort you have a fine view of the Vale of Tweed.

Above Galashiels bridge, on Ladhope hill, the Edinburgh and Jedburgh coach changed horses. An inquiring traveller said something about the Allan water and the Valley of Glendearg, when Sandy Nichols, the old coachman replied, "I'e, ae mon, I'll point it out tae ye, when we get tae the brig. It's an awfu' place yon, ye ken."

The circumstance of the old man being thrown from the Blucher coach, by the leaders taking fright, and thereby breaking his arm, must be in the remembrance of many of the elder inhabitants of Galashiels, by whom he was so much respected for his civility, when travelling with him. The coach was driven back to the Inn on that occasion by the guard, where the



old man received every attention which the place could afford. This accident took place about two miles on the road, near the bridge which crosses the river Allan, and ever after, old Sandy attributed the occurrence to the fairies, saying, "They're ae up to some o' their pranks." Many a ride has old Sandy given us boys as far as the bridge on our half-holiday, when we went to gather the "fairy stones." I well remember his saying to a traveller who sat on the box beside him, "That is the place Sir Walter hae tauld us a' about in the 'Monastery' ye ken, sic an awfu' body as the 'Lady o' Avenal' I never heard o', but I dare sae ye' mind it a' as weel as I can tell ye;" and taking a pinch from the large mull, a present from Sir Walter, which he drew from his great coat pocket, he whipped the leaders into their accustomed pace, and whistled his favourite air, "Tullochgorum," in a very spirited manner. He used to set us down with the never-failing caution to "tak' care ye dinna get souced in the stream, like Monk Ambrose, ye ken." Sir Walter himself had many a time journeyed with the old man from Darnick to Edinburgh. The Fairy Dean is on the domain of Lord Somerville, and well worth a visit from the many associations it awakens. It is supposed to have derived its

name from the curious clay productions called "Fairy Stones," which, after a shower of rain, are formed into various shapes, resembling buttons, bonnets, cradles, and the like ; some of these stones, which are supposed to be the workmanship of fairy hands, the author has still in his possession. Like every spot which tradition has hallowed, this has also received touches of additional beauty from the pen of the great Magician, as may be seen by referring to the many interesting passages in the "Monastery." No one, I am sure, who has pondered over that rich creation, the "White Lady of Avenal" and the "Glendennings," can ever go near the place without visiting it, and conjuring up the splendid images with which it is peopled. This classic ground is on the poetic banks of the far-famed Allan Water, called by some the Elwan Water, a beautiful little stream, where towards the bridge—

"While o'er their heads the hazels hing,  
The little birdies blithely sing."

On the slope of a hill, brown, bare, and barren ; for some distance around, the brae dips down into the stream, and being very slippery, makes it difficult to keep a footing. The most perfect stone I ever met with resembled in shape a cradle with a child reclining in it. Ancient

tradition having long haunted the place with witches, caused us to keep a sharp look-out towards evening, and once, while raking over with our hands the surface of the clay, a cow put its head over the dyke and moaned so loud that the sound sent us headlong into the stream, which fortunately was not very deep. We gazed upon each other in wonderment, and at length hurried home with the superstitious notion that the Allan Water, like the lake of Cauldshiels, was haunted with a bogle of a very mysterious nature.

You reach this haunt of the fairies by crossing Gala bridge to Ladhope hill, then turning to the right along the Darnick and Jedburgh road, till you come to the entrance of Ladhope house. From this point there is a fine view of the vale of Abbotsford, and of Abbotsford house with its beautiful garden-shaped plantations, while beyond all this, looming above the scene, stands brown-breasted Eildon. Turning up the lane on the left, by Ladhope house, brings the stranger to the scene of the Glendennings, with the Allan Water on the right hand, overlooked by the purple-faced Chatter Craigs, and House-Brier Hills. Passing Glendearg farm-house for about a mile, Heslop Tower is reached, lying a short distance from the roadside on the left

hand, and known in the "Monastery" as the tower of Glendearg, the place where Halbert Glendenning returned with the copy of the Holy Scriptures, and found Hob Happer, the Miller, and his dark-eyed laughter-loving "peony-rosed cheeked daughter Mysie," who his mother had settled in her own mind should be his destined bride.

The whole spot around here forms the scenery of the "White Lady of Avenal." About one thousand yards to the right of Glendearg stands Colmsley tower, both on the left hand side of the road; while on the right, surrounded by old trees, and nearly facing Colmsley, stands the tower of Langshaw; clambering over the dyke on the left hand, the traveller may here wander knee-deep in wild grass, round the edge of a field, and by this route reach the tower of Glendearg.

Over a low-browed arched doorway, not more than five feet in height, is legibly chiselled the following letters and figures N. G. 1585, E. L. The bolt holes on each side, show that some formidable fastening had been fixed there, in the shape of a door, in times gone by. About two yards beyond the entrance, on the left hand, there is a doorway, also with strong bolt holes on each side leading into a large vaulted keep, lighted by three circular openings

about a foot each in diameter inside, and gradually tapering off to the exterior which does not measure more than four inches; to the right there is an appearance of there having been a narrow entrance with three stone steps inside. Here no doubt many a neighbour's cattle has been driven in the forays of the olden time. You see in imagination, cows go lowing down the glen in a moonlight night with half a score Border spearsmen at their heels, and here many a crime was committed which the silent walls can never babble about. By ascending a winding staircase about twelve steps you come to a landing, and here are two doorways, one on the left, the other direct before you, the one to the left leads into an apartment which has formerly been used as a kitchen, as one may conjecture from the fireplace and chimney; from this apartment upwards the tower is roofless. The width of the walls to this entrance is at least six feet. It does not seem to have been parted or partitioned, but the floor which has been over it, has two fireplaces. The door before you on the first landing has led into a square tower, very small in dimensions, and judging from the marks in the wall where the joists have rested, they have been very low; this square tower is

also roofless, and from it there has formerly been a door which lead into the kitchen ; here there are four windows, looking in three different directions, the same as the rest of the windows all the way up. There seems to have been in this square tower four flats or floors, judging from the fireplaces one above the other, but what is most singular, the fireplaces in each room are on opposite sides. The stonework around them is elaborately carved ; a circular tower staircase leads to the top of the building, with a door on each landing, with strong bolt holes. This place has evidently been a tremendous stronghold in its time, so massive are its walls, so strong its rusted bolts.

The ancient towers of Colmsley are in ruins, the outer walls only now remaining. By returning to the high road, and crossing a field on the opposite side, the Allan Water and the scene of the " White Lady of Avenal " are reached. An old ash tree marks the spot where the " well " formerly stood, named by Sir Walter in the " Monastery," but which is now dried up. It is a wild, ferny, and weedy spot, and a little beyond it, you enter one of the most romantic spots in the Vale of Allan. Here the river foams, as it rushes among the rocky parts that encumber its course, while high up, and almost per-

pendicular rise the banks on the opposite side, covered with natural wood and wild flowers. Looking down the "bit burnie," which curves just here, short off to the left, the eye rests upon a huge, brown-faced, sturdy-looking rock, seemingly rejoicing in the mastery it has gained, in turning the current of the wimpling fairy stream. This curve forms an amphitheatre, filled with various shaded trees, the rock at the corner is quite bare, with the exception of one solitary ash tree that has dug its fibres into the interstices.

Following the many winding ways of the stream, sometimes crossing it to cut off a corner, you come to a hanging sheep-gate spanning the river, with a railing stretching away up the hill, the boundary of a certain policy ; crossing this leads to a young plantation and to another sheep-gate and railing ; clambering this you tread the sacred haunts of Fairy Dean, and reach the mysterious beds of fairy stones, which after rain may be gathered very plentifully.

It is a very singular freak of nature that the spot should be so circumscribed, for the part of the bank where the stones are found is not more than one hundred feet in length. And on this only are they picked up, and that too, in

patches on a very steep bank. You can easily tell the spots by the peculiar appearance of the clay, which looks very much like a quantity of worm-hills on a wet day, curly, and very sticky, almost like bird-lime. The 'fairy stones' are found on the surface, sometimes they will roll down the brae, to the water's edge. Those found in the water, if there any length of time, become black; they will not dissolve, neither will they break; those found on the bank are of a fawn colour. Following the stream, brings you to the bridge at Allan foot, on the Jedburgh road where Sandy Nichols dropped us with his never-ending caution, "tae tak' heed o' the fairies."

Many strangers wandering to the Dean without a guide fancy the fairy stones are found buried in the clay, and go armed with trowels and knives, and cut and hew away with might and main. I was much amused at finding the first part of the bed we came to cut and slashed at least a foot deep. Andrew Sanderson an intelligent Galashiels weaver, who was with me on my last pilgrimage, drily observed, "There's been sair wark here," and passing a little further on the bank to a curve, we found two young moustached tourists, cutting away and sweating under a hot sun, which



annoyed Andrew very much, who exclaimed, "Ye winna find meikle that way ye ken, their a' on the top o' the brae an' no underneath the grund." So, watching our process, they followed the same plan, and were more successful.

Much of the beauty of the Tweed lies in the interest given to it in song, as its banks are bare and barren, and scarcely a tree is to be seen, excepting in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford; but as it abounds in that delightful fish, the trout, nothing could have been a greater source of annoyance to the angler, when fly-fishing, than trees upon its banks. Abbotsford and its neighbourhood also abound with trout and trees, but a beautiful green sward fringes the river, thereby rendering it a delightful spot for the Waltonian sport; there is also a small plantation on the opposite bank which stretches along the edge of the water, otherwise the nakedness of the river would be observable for some distance. In this plantation there is a cave, access to which is gained by a hollow tree close by the water's edge, and I have often marvelled that it escaped the quick and penetrating eye of Sir Walter Scott, and that he should have allowed such a poetical place to have remained unnoticed. I have in vain looked for any mention

of it in his works. It is also curious that this secret hiding place, so well known to us boys, was never, as I recollect, mentioned to him. One reason was, our little store-house might have become known, which would have been a matter of great importance to us, as we kept our fishing-rods and tackle in it to save the trouble of carrying them home. The only means of access to this mysterious cavern without using a boat, which must have been done at a great risk, was to let ourselves down by means of the branches of the tree, and suspended by the hands so hang, until the body became balanced, then to leave go, and drop about six feet among tangling briars and hazel branches. Facing the entrance, a rock about three feet high, rose out of the water, which afforded shelter from those on the opposite or Abbotsford side of the river. Access to the cave was gained by means of a door hung in the trunk of a very large tree, which grew in such a peculiar way leaning towards the river, that it was impossible to see the entrance by looking over the top of the embankment; this door was covered with ivy which grew around the whole of the trunk, and when opened yielded like net-work. Once in, we crawled upon our hands and knees for some yards,

when the place then widened, and the further extremity was about twelve feet square, the entrance was lighted by small apertures which opened upon the river, and were imperceptible to any one without ; at the further end there was a chimney which ran into a hollow tree, hence the smoke rose to a considerable height before it was dispersed into open air.

There is but little doubt that this cave was once the hiding-place of the Moss-troopers of old, their principal resort being the picturesque hill called Ruberslaw, near the charming villages of Lilliesleaf, Linthill, and Ridle, which are most delightfully surrounded with cultivated fields, and diversified with rural scenery.

Minto hill, with its rugged crags, was another place of security for the bold Borderers, who in the days of yore spread such consternation amongst their lowland neighbours, by their raids and harryings, and in this cave they no doubt found shelter ; for even after they had been watched into the wood their sudden disappearance would puzzle all pursuit. This cave was known to but few of us, and was handed down from one to another by special favour.

Had the powerful pen of Sir Walter been applied to this subject, not unworthy of it, we

should no doubt have been let into the secret of some dark mystery, which will now rest in oblivion, but which his retentive memory and acquaintance with the spot, would have been both as to the design and purpose of the place, and have sifted out the origin of the mysterious cave. A little above this plan stands a solitary hut, looking for all the world as if it had been placed there by chance, seemingly wondering why it should have been so much neglected as to be alone; this is the only remains of the whereabouts of the little but notable village of Boldside; here may be traced some few remains of what there once to have been walls, and here and there a few of trees show that the spot has at some time been cultivated as gardens; this hut is now the residence of a fisherman, who also manages the ferry, which is very convenient to any one wishing to cross the Tweed just there, and he will row each person over for a boat. His boat was carefully moored in a little cove in the embankment of the river, the moorland which was overgrown with bulrushes and weeds, amid which it was sheltered from the weather.

I recollect the old fisherman telling us of a man who went about the country with a

selling goods; he had heard of folks fording the Tweed, and therefore considered it passable anywhere, so placing himself betwixt the two panniers which the donkey carried, he urged the animal into the water, which was too deep to ford, and the cuddy being compelled to swim, so alarmed the owner that he tumbled himself into one of the hampers, and his weight immediately overturned the poor beast; he scrambled shoreward while the poor donkey was carried down with the stream. "I took the boat, ye ken," said the old fisherman, "and having got the master into it, after a meikle deal o' fashing we tied a string round the cuddy's neck, and I rowed them ashore." When Sir Walter heard the story, he said laughing, "It reminds me o'Dame Ferguson the fishwife, who, after taking more whiskey than she could weel carry, tried to mount her cuddy wi' her creils, and got her heels in one pannier and her head in the other, and sae unable to move again kept her balance, while the puir beast, the mair sensible o' the twa, brought her hame safely to the door. A souse like that o' the pedlar would hae sobered her at aince."

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE REPAIRS OF MELROSE ABBEY.

MANY will remember the interest Sir Walter took in the repairing of Melrose Abbey, the whole of which was entrusted to his superintendence, and which was to him something more than a "labour of love," as he represented the head of his clan; the young Duke of Buccleuch being then a minor. I do not think the highest praise bestowed upon his works, by the most eminent men of the age, ever afforded him half the pleasure that he enjoyed while overlooking the workmen who, under his taste and guidance, were employed to save this far-famed and ancient structure from ruin. That love of clanship into which he entered heart and soul in the true spirit of the old Borderers, at this time reigned strongly in him, as the guardians of the young Duke had chosen him from all others to save the Abbey from further decay, thus making him act as the head of the clan, from whence he derived his name. To understand this feeling in a man like Sir Walter Scott, it must be remembered that the Lords of

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Buccleuch had, from the most ancient times, held the lands in the surrounding neighbourhood for the monks of Melrose, and that they still retain the same territorial power, though altar and shrine have long since been tumbled into dust by the fanatic followers of the reforming Knox, who finished the work of ruin which others had, centuries before, begun. To any other person saving the Author of the "Monastery," the task would merely have been that of superintending the repairs of an old building, but to him it was a withdrawing of the curtain of the past, an unveiling of the scenes of other years, and that too on the very ground which he himself had rendered immortal by his "Lay of the Last Minstrel," a spot which thousands of pilgrims had visited, drawn thitherward by the magic power of his pen. How few poets have had the happiness to give a lasting name to an ancient edifice by the beauty of their descriptions, and then to re-decorate and bring out anew the buried beauties of the venerable pile itself, under their own eyes, and by their own commands. I may here state that since the last edition of the present work was sold, I have again visited the neighbourhood of Abbotsford and Melrose Abbey.

Every hour I could steal from other duties,

and somehow I found the means of stealing many more than I ought to have done, I devoted to watching the workmen proceed with the repairs of the Abbey ; perhaps it was not so much the beauties of the building that drew me thither, as the pleasure of meeting with Sir Walter. I often thought he fancied the ladder more secure, if Tom Purdie and I stood at the foot of it, when he ascended the scaffolding to see what progress the workmen were making, or to pull out with his own hands the moss and lichen from the rents which Time had made, and moralize all the while, in his half serious and half comic manner, of the monks of old, and the many ways they found of mortifying the flesh to the great scandal of their order.

Though I have before alluded to Sir Walter Scott's picturesque language, and his peculiar manner of bringing objects long passed away again before the eye of the memory ; yet, never did I notice him so happy, in this rich descriptive power, as when he superintended the repairs of the Abbey, and stood as it were upon the very threshold of departed centuries. As an instance of this, I well remember, in his account of David I. founding the Abbey, how he not only enumerated the meadows and water, pastures, ploughed lands, highways,



footpaths, fruit, timber, fisherie, &c., mentioned in the charter, but he also drew a picture of the Cistercian Monks "fitting," as he called it, from the Abbey of Rievall, in Yorkshire, to take possession of the new Abbey of Melrose. He described their white dresses, the jingling of their cooking utensils, the long array of mules, with Abbot Richard riding at the head of the procession, and the tag-rag and bob-tail of menials, dogs, &c., that brought up the rear. Then he would point out the very road they came, and as you looked over the landscape, the imagination became so vivid while heated by his description, that the long line of procession seemed again to move along as it had done seven hundred years ago; and such power had the great Magician, that you would scarcely have been startled, while in that mood of mind, to have beheld them once more entering the low-browed arch beneath the southern window. On such occasions Johnny Bowers would sometimes stand listening speechless, with his mouth wide open, or turn sharp round as if the ghost of old Abbot Richard was close upon his heels. Or, shifting the date to some century and a-half after the time of good King David the founder, he would describe the consternation amongst the monks of Melrose, when another king, Robert

Bruce, sent out his soldiers to carry off all their beeves and muttons, lest they should fall into the hands of the English invader, Edward II. Tell how the English were fairly starved out of Scotland, and how in their retreat they revenged themselves, for the loss of food, on the religious houses; killed William, the prior of Melrose;—the Abbot, no doubt, as he said, having taken care of number one by absenting himself on that occasion,—when they carried off the silver pix, and profaned the high altar and showed no more respect to abbeys than they did to the byres which they fired, after carrying off every crummy they could lay hands on. Then he had the names of all the landowners in the surrounding neighbourhood, who lived at that period; and could tell how some refused to pay the fines for repairing the ravages on the abbey by the English, and what a time the old Abbot had of it to raise the two thousand pounds which the king, Robert Bruce, had granted him, “if he could get it;” and how he had to muster the soldiers that were sworn to serve the abbey, and protect the rights of the monks of Melrose; one day fighting and another coaxing; now cursing them with bell, book, and candle, then besieging the fortified fortresses they refused to give up, until Bruce himself appeared and compelled them to surrender.

He would show how necessity compelled churchmen to attack laymen, and how they again retaliated upon the fat monks, carried off their cattle to the keeps, and sometimes demanded absolution for the deed at the point of the lance; giving the holy brotherhood their choice, either to grant them remission, or have the abbey fired about their ears; "thinking," as he would say drily, "that if they were to be damned, the firing of an extra abbey or two would not made their downward quarters much warmer." Then he would tell of wicked old Borderers who, when they could not get absolution at one abbey, would drive off my lord abbot's cattle to some other, and presenting them as an atonement to the rival establishment, obtain the required forgiveness; and perhaps die fighting under the blessing of the Peter, which they had robbed some brother Paul to pay, and for which, when discovered, they would be doubly cursed. Then he would draw some humorous picture of the explanation between the abbots—the endeavour to recapture the cattle, the extra cursing on the occasion, in the midst of which, perhaps, the bold Borderer would ride up at the head of his followers, and either threaten to fight it out with the armed retainers of the abbey, or make the easiest

terms he could, by crossing the border, harrying the English, and depositing a portion of the spoil with the monks, of whom he would say, "if not themselves thieves, they were, at least, receivers of stolen property!" He once remarked that the revenues of Melrose Abbey, if managed by clever agents, would, in the present day, have realised as much as one hundred thousand pounds a-year, which, as he said, divided amongst the sixty monks, was much better pay than the poor priests of the present day received; and that in those remote times, a full third of the cultivated land was in the possession of the Church. Then pointing with pride to the river and the valley, he would dwell upon the taste those old fathers had for the picturesque—for the slumberous waving of the trees, and the drowsy murmur of a stream.

But he always spoke with great veneration of the monks of old, as having alone kept the lamp of learning alight in a dark and barbarous age. Then pointing out some portion of the beautiful workmanship in the abbey, he would remark how far we were behind these ancient builders, and how deficient all our modern ecclesiastical architecture was of the grand effect produced by these early fathers of the Church. He sat down in the same great spirit of charity

to judge of the deeds of the dead as he did of the actions of the living, and was ever disposed to look at the worst in the most favourable light. He looked upon the past pleasantly; what was dark and savage he softened down, by placing it before the eye with gentle apologies for the age;—just the same as he would plead for the poetry of Chaucer, by saying it was the custom of the time to be coarse, and that had the author of the “*Canterbury Tales*” lived in the present day, he would have been a highly polished English gentleman. I think it was on this occasion that he described Chaucer as the best delineator of English life that ever wrote until the time of Shakspeare: that in the writings of the old bard, who has now been dead four centuries and a half, we find the manners and customs of the age in which he lived, as life-like as if the individuals stood before us. Would that I could call to mind the very words Sir Walter used; but that wish is hopeless.

The remembrance of these happy days spent in the presence of one so gifted are like sunny spots in the dark road of life, green resting-places in the desert waste amid which Memory sits down and broods over the past with pleasure, while pale Regret hangs her head and sighs to think that Death has power over the hand

that can sign itself immortal. Never shall I forget his delight when, on the workmen removing the heavy buttresses, column after column was revealed on each side as clear and sharp and perfect and beautiful as when, long centuries ago, they first threw their shadows on the floor of the abbey. Had he discovered a gold mine it could not have made him happier than when from behind the bulky and unsightly masses of masonry, he again brought those beautiful columns to light. Many a smile played on the faces of the workmen as they listened to his original remarks and happy quotations, while Johnny Bowers—

“Stood, like ane bewitch’d,  
An’ thought his very een enrich’d;  
’Till first ae caper, syne anither,  
He tint his reason a’ thegither.”

exclaiming, “The like o’ that now, I wouldna wonder but what the Sherra kenned a’ about ilka post, an’ wha had the biggin o’ the meikle auld abbey, eh! mon, he hae a mighty knowledge o’ thae auld monks, aiblins ye didna ken that till I tauld ye.” And then, as if to give greater weight to his remarks, he would poke his elbow into your side and wink most mysteriously with one eye; or if he saw Sir Walter looking, pretend to find something that inter-

ested him very much at the moment in the carved work; or if he were near enough, he would begin to point out the beauty of a nun's head which was an object of Johnny's most said anything especially good he would lay hold of the front of his red waistcoat with each hand, ardent admiration. When he fancied he had and begin twitching and pulling it down as if to say, "There now, that's worthy o' the Sherra." It was a great treat to see Sir Walter draw the little body out, and I marvel I have not seen the old man coloured by the great Magician figure in one of the novels; he would have made a splendid character. Johnny was a little bit of an historian, and found great pleasure in enlightening his visitors about names and dates, most of which he had no doubt picked up from listening to Sir Walter, who very good-naturedly had lent his aid in drawing up a Guide Book which bore Johnny's name, to assist the old man. But the greatest treat of all was to hear him mouthing "The Lay," running one line into the other in his broad Scotch, and waving his little arms for greater effect, as if he had been inspired by the whole of the Nine Muses. The poet having recommended moonlight as the most favourable time for viewing the abbey, and as the fickle luminary only shone occasion-

ally, and not always at the time when visitors came to see the place, Johnny, not to lose the siller, either in light or coin, substituted torches, which he affixed to long poles, and, as he said, they did "meikle better, the moon only shining on ae side of the abbey at a time," while the torch shone wherever you liked to carry it, which was a great convenience, as you could not carry the moon about. Johnny had also added a steeple to the abbey more than history vouches for, and in it he had hung a bell, and to the bell a border-foray, in which the English were so closely pursued by the Scotch that they were compelled to drop the bell into the Tweed. "I hae heard its been seen," Johnny would say, "but this waur lang syne, an' nae doubt when the river was low, verra low indeed, an' no sae meikle deep, aiblins." Sir Walter had many a laugh at Johnny's bell and extra steeple.

The Abbey is no doubt one of the most beautiful pieces of Gothic architecture to be found in Europe; and since Sir Walter has immortalized it in the "Lay" and the "Monastery," it has probably drawn together more visitors than ever before went on a pilgrimage to see a pile of mouldering ruins. The beauty of its sculpture, the symmetry,



lightness, and sharpness of its mouldings and floral decorations, have become the admiration of every beholder; and when we consider the havoc made by the followers of Knox, we almost wonder that there is so much beauty left for succeeding ages to look upon. Of the rude barbarians who shattered altar and shrine, Sir Walter has made the following beautiful remarks. He says: "that the humour of demolishing monuments of ancient piety and munificence, and that in a poor country like Scotland, where there was no chance of their being replaced, was useless, mischievous, and barbarous." No doubt the poverty of the country never entered the thoughts of these stern destroyers, and that they would just have committed the same ravages had they overrun Italy.

Chiselled out on one of the buttresses are the royal arms of Scotland, at the end of the nave, and this appears to have been done in the reign of James the Fourth, from the **J. R.**, *Jacobus Quartus*, which is chiselled above one of the unicorn's horns. The crest, which is the crown of Scotland, is beautifully carved; and between the legs of the unicorn is the form of a little cherub, holding a shield; but what he is doing there, as Johnny Bowers humorously says in his

Guide Book, "I leave to the imagination of others to determine." Of this nave, eight of the windows still remain: they are nearly seventeen feet high and ten feet wide, and terminate in exquisite Gothic points; the windows light eight small square chapels of uniform dimensions which run along the South side of the nave, and are separated from each other by thin partition walls of stone, and are used as burying-places. The west end of the nave, and five of the chapels included in it, are now roofless, though they still remain, on the right as you enter; the monks' and nuns' heads, with which they are decorated, are all beautifully carved, and there is something very chaste in the head-dresses of the nuns. These Sir Walter never failed in pointing out to his guests whenever he accompanied them in their visit to the—

"Meikle grey Abbaye,"

as it is called by an old poet. Here and there, there are many grotesque heads, some with leaves in their mouths, others with flowers coming out of their cheeks; one especially has a very droll look, for though it bears the resemblance to the head of a fox, there is something of a human look about the forehead

and eyes ; in its mouth are two doves. Sir Walter had an old legend appended to this head, about a monk and two nuns ; the latter for their frailty were bricked up alive in one of the vaults, and, if I remember aright, the monk made his escape, being as cunning as the Reynard he is made to resemble. In short there was scarcely a figure about the Abbey but what he knew something of, and could link to some story. Bitterly did the author of *Waverley* ban those who had removed a portion of the ruins to build the prison of Melrose, and repair the mills and sluices. "They were worse" he said "than the Roundheads, who in 1649 threw down so many images of the old saints, for the latter carried on the work of destruction through religious prejudices, and what they did was done through conscientious motives, while the former had no such excuse, nothing but a beggarly and barbaric economy, may auld Nick shake 'em."

On such occasions as these the original Jonathan Oldbuck peeped out without disguise or concealment ; then, having got rid of this little burst of indignation, he would set about softening down their faults, and find no end of excuses for what they had done, sometimes ending with—"Well ! well, they are all dead

and gone, and perhaps knew nothing of the history of the grand old Abbey; if they had learnt to love it as I do, perhaps they would, like me, have worshipped every grey old stone, from foundation to fane."

On the fronts of the wings of some of the Cherubs is the mallet and rose, the arms of Melrose; the mallet is to show to posterity the rude instrument with which those beautiful ornaments were cut out that decorate the noble fabric, for the flowers, though chiselled in stone, have a beauty and delicacy, seldom surpassed in the finest wood carving. Beside the mallet, called in Scotch *mell*, a rose is also sculptured, intended no doubt as a pun on the name Melrose. Above another of the buttresses, are the figures of the Virgin and Child, which, it is much to be regretted, are not complete. There is a story handed down by tradition that, in the year 1649, a person was employed to destroy the images, who was struck in the arm with a piece of the stone, while demolishing the Child, and so seriously injured, that he lost the use of it, and as a scoff upon his name, was ever after called "Stumpy," which cognomen his posterity still retain. Close to the Virgin are small windows ornamented with flowers of elegant tracery, and

which are oddly blended with the figure of a sow playing the bagpipes. But the figures most admired are those of the "blind and the lame," which are admirably represented, as the cripple, who appears to be in great pain, is mounted upon the back of the blind, who you can almost fancy you see writhing and exhausted from the weight of his burden. Close to the south window is a maniac-like figure, who appears as if peeping through the ivy with one hand to his throat, while in the other he holds a knife, and the figure below a ladle, as if catching the blood that streams from above; a small window divides these figures from a merry group of musicians. The grandness of the east window—about the repairs of which Sir Walter bestowed so much care, superintending the whole erection of the scaffolding lest they should injure the exquisite tracery—is the surprise and admiration of every one; it is named by tradition the "'Prentice's window," from the fact of its having been finished by the apprentice during his master's absence in Rome, whither he had gone for information to carry out the design. When the apprentice had completed the window he chiselled on the wall,

"The best mason of masonry,  
Except the man that learnt me."

The master, upon his return, was so astonished to find the window completed, that, it is said, when he had read the first line of the inscription he immediately precipitated the industrious apprentice from the scaffolding and killed him on the spot; but when his passion cooled, and he read further and found, "Except the man that learnt me," he was so struck with remorse, for the cruel deed, that he threw himself headforemost after the apprentice; and that they were both picked up and buried in the same grave. But this was one of Johnny Bowers' old world stories.

The window is worthy of such a tradition, and deserving all the care Sir Walter took of it; for, to say nothing of its gigantic proportions, which are fifty-seven feet by twenty-eight; its slender shafts, diamonded cross-bars, Gothic pinnacles, and rich niches, are unsurpassed in monastic architecture. Above this splendid window are the statues of King David and of good Queen Maud; both the figures are seated, and the king holds in one hand the remains of a globe. The knotted chain which sweeps round the upper part of the window, and terminates in an open crown above the head of the royal pair, has a very pleasing effect. In speaking of the causes of dilapidation, while

writing about the repairs of the abbey, Sir Walter Scott says, "It is the rain which finds its way betwixt the arch-stone in the winter, and is there arrested by the frost, which ruins ancient buildings when exposed to wet. Ice occupies more space than water unfrozen, and thus, when formed, operates as so many wedges inserted between the stones of the arch, which, of course, are dislocated by this interposition, and in process of time the equilibrium of the arch is destroyed." In the same letter, which was addressed to Lord Montagu, he says, "Please God, I will be on the roof of the old abbey myself when the scaffolding is up. When I was a boy I could climb like a wild cat; and an entire affection to the work on hand must, on this occasion, counterbalance the disadvantages of increased weight and stiffened limbs." But in spite of his lameness, the Minstrel was an admirable climber, his great strength lying in his muscular arms, which never failed him.

The Abbey is surrounded by its ancient burial ground, and the best view to be had of the whole ruin is from the south-east corner. In the north nave there is a Saxon door, upon the threshold of which are engraved a cross, a sword, a mallet and shield; this threshold has formerly

been a gravestone, though no one can now whose bones lie buried beneath; close to is the remains of a beautiful turnpike stair; first step lifted up, and beneath it is a vault this was no doubt erected to conceal valuable articles belonging to the Abbey those old turbulent times when "might right." Above this vault is what is called north star window, being the exact imitation of a star and having a circle in the centre, six semicircles proceeding from it, pointing in the Gothic style.

In the west of the north nave there are six niches, representing the dignitaries of the Church; these are beautifully ornamented with foliage which have a most life-like look, they are representations of house-leeks, plantain leaves, fern, acorns, oak-leaves, trefoils, scallop shells, and many others; this nave is considered the finest piece of architecture in the whole building, and Sir Walter thus describes it

"Spreading herbs and flow'rets bright,  
Glistened with the dew of night;  
Nor herb nor flow'ret glistened there,  
But was carved in the cloister arches as fair

Many descriptions of this venerable ruin are scattered over his works; it seems to have arisen before his "inward eye" unawares



many occasions, while he was creating those splendid fictions which the world will not willingly let die. I have often fancied he looked more poetical while musing among the ruins of Melrose Abbey, than in any other place beside ; but this might be fancy, caught from the solemnity of the scene.

Nor must I, while speaking of the Abbey, forget the little Town of Melrose, the *Kennaquhair* of Sir Walter, situated on the south side of the Tweed, near the base of the Eildon hills, but a short distance from Abbotsford, and which was anciently called little Fordel. It is built in form of a cross with four angles ; there is also a cross erected in the centre of it about twenty feet high, with a flight of five steps surmounted by an upright stone, while at each end are the remains of an Unicorn supporting the royal arms of Scotland, together with the mallet and a rose, the arms of Melrose as seen in the Abbey, and supposed to be coeval with it. There is a ridge in a field near the town called corse-rig, which the proprietor of the field holds upon the sole condition that he shall keep up the cross. The Blucher coach passed along the adjacent road on its way to Kelso, and a vast number of persons at one period took the opportunity of seeing

“Melrose aright  
By the pale moonlight;”

and to accomplish this they remained all night at one of the inns, several of which afforded ample accommodation, and so returned next day by the coach which ran from Jedburgh to Edinburgh.

There were several gentlemen's seats near Melrose, among which may be mentioned Abbey Park, Ravenwood House, Gattonside House, and many others familiar to the readers of Sir Walter Scott's works, and all of which add greatly to the beauty of the neighbourhood. At no great distance from Melrose, on the south of the Tweed, is the village of Darnick, which stands by the main road that leads to the Abbey; formerly a cross stood here, at the foot of which the pilgrims pattered their paternosters. A little further on stands Bridge-End, once noted for having a drawbridge over the Tweed; a road from the northern parts of the country, led to this bridge, and was called the Girthgate. According to Mr. Milne, author of the History of Melrose, there have formerly been three pillars, the centre one having a chain to draw up the bridge, and on it a small house, for those who kept the bridge and received the customs; upon this pillar he

further adds, the arms of the Pringles of Galashiels, so often mentioned by Sir Walter, were sculptured. The chain bridge, which now crosses the Tweed, forms a communication between Melrose and Gattonside, and is a very beautiful structure, though erected for passengers only.

## CHAPTER XII.

SIR WALTER'S EARLY STUDIES NATURALLY PREPARED HIM FOR AUTHORSHIP — THE CAUSES SHEWN IN HIS OWN OPINIONS ON NOVEL-WRITING, MORE ESPECIALLY AS REGARDS FIELDING AND SMOLLETT.

ONE great advantage Sir Walter Scott possessed over all other writers of the present age, and that was, his thorough knowledge of the manners and customs, past and present, of the Scottish people; and the tact he displayed in commencing his series of splendid Novels by depicting the characters among whom he had lived, or at least known through others, who had been out in the ever-to-be-remembered '45. The number of anecdotes he had thus gathered and which were a thousand times better material than are to be met with in printed works, were a rich storehouse always at hand, and which few authors could have had the taste to have drawn from, in the judicious and tasteful way that he did: for they furnished him, not only with material for his unsurpassed works, but also for his entertaining conversa-

tion. He lived on the turning of an age, and the knell that tolled that great man's death, tolled also the death of a remarkable period in history; there was just enough of the old feudal life in existence to be picturesque and poetical without being barbarous; it was old enough to wear a grey tinge of the past, without sinking into the polished present, or losing its original features in fashionable effeminacy. His lameness in childhood was also of great service to his after literary career; he was by it thrown a great deal into female society, and many of the old ladies he mingled amongst, besides being highly intelligent, possessed rich hordes of old stories, wild legends, and time-honoured traditions, which were adapted to his peculiar genius, and which, in the inner chambers of his mind, he ever after treasured. In addition to these they had known many of the brave rebels who had been out with the Pretender, were well acquainted with their hair-breadth 'scapes, their perils by flood and field, to which the boy Walter listened with eager ear; and when he grew older, he visited the very scenes in which these wild adventures took place, and years after transferred the descriptions to his picturesque pages. Nor was this the only preparation he made for his great

task ; in collecting the Border Ballads, he again found mines of treasure, and none knew better than he how to separate the gold from the dross, and, when it was once purified, to form of it the most chaste and beautiful ornaments. He himself has said, "that as to what he has done for Scotland as a writer, he was no more entitled to the merit which had been ascribed to him, than a servant who scours the brasses to the credit of having made them ; that he perhaps had been a good house-maid to Scotland, and given the country a rubbing-up, and in so doing might deserve some praise for assiduity, and that was all." This was spoken at an election dinner at Jedburgh, in acknowledgment of his health having been drunk ; and well and modestly was it spoken, though the world would never have permitted any other than the author of *Waverley* so to have spoken of himself. He did more than scour the brasses ; he found them burned, battered, useless, mis-shapen, full of holes ; in short, nothing better than an unsightly mass of old copper (to use his own material), and he worked this up into a thousand times more beautifully-formed vessels than ever the metal before wore when turned out new from the first workman's hands. He brought to bear upon

common tinkers' work a master-mind, a thorough knowledge of the higher craft, which would have startled those who first rough-hewed those homely and unsightly vessels.

Even the Law he was brought up to was to him of great advantage, and he pressed it into his literary service. On this subject, Mr. Adolphus, a most discriminating critic, says, "If ever in the progress of his narrative a legal topic presents itself, he neither declines the subject, nor timidly slurs it over ; but enters as largely and formally into all its technicalities, as if the case were actually 'before the fifteen.' The manners, humours, and professional *bavardage* of lawyers are sketched with all the ease and familiarity, which result from habitual observation. In fact, the subject of law, which is a stumbling-block to others, is to him a spot of repose." This was written on supposition, and before the Waverley Novels were acknowledged, and never was criticism more just. It is that lawyer-like turn of mind which gave such dry humour to many of the raciest passages of his novels, and perhaps deepened his insight of character, and sharpened his acute penetration. Look at his own masterly essays on Novel Writing, and see what a thorough knowledge he has of his art ; what a perfect

master he is of every essential, and how completely he comprehends every attribute. The following remarks were prefixed to "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," long before it was known he was the author of the Waverley Novels, and, I need hardly add, were written by himself.

"It is the object of the novel-writer, to place before the reader as full and accurate a representation of the events which he relates, as can be done by mere force of an excited imagination, without the assistance of material objects. His sole appeal is made to the world of fancy and of ideas, and in this consist his strength and his weakness, his poverty and his wealth. He cannot, like the painter, present a visible and tangible representation of his town and his woods, his palaces and his castles; but, by awakening the imagination of a congenial reader, he places before his mind's eye, landscapes fairer than those of Claude, and wilder than those of Salvator. He cannot, like the dramatist, present before our living eyes, the heroes of former days, or the beautiful creations of his own fancy, embodied in the grace and majesty of Kemble or of Siddons; but he can teach his reader to conjure up forms even more dignified and beautiful than theirs. The same



difference follows him through every branch of his art. The author of a novel, in short, has neither stage nor scene-painter, nor company of comedians, nor dresser, nor wardrobe—words applied with the best of his skill must supply all that these bring to the assistance of the dramatist. Action, and tone, and gesture; the smile of the lover, the frown of the tyrant, the grimace of the buffoon—all must be told, for nothing can be shown. Thus, the very dialogue becomes mixed with the narration; for he must not only tell what the characters actually said, in which his task is the same as that of the dramatic author, but must also describe the tone, the look, the gesture, with which their speech is accompanied,—telling, in short, all which, in the drama, it becomes the province of the actor to express.”

Here, then, we have the whole mystery of the art laid bare, the very outline of the figure put in before our eyes, and the wet colours mixed on the palette. But what little use was made of these accessories, before he commenced writing! I think, with the exception of Fielding and Smollett—of whom we shall see his opinion presently—very few of our Novel writers saw the necessity of making a theatre with scenery and decorations, in which to place their actors.

If ever they attempted the quaint language of the period of Elizabeth, it went but little further than a few "Yea, marrys," or "Good morrow, good Lieutenant." As for the scenes and landscapes which his predecessors placed before the eye of the imagination, they were the vilest of daubs, and bear no more resemblance to nature, when placed before his own beautiful painting, than the hard figure of a dog on a Birmingham tea-board, does to the all but living representation of the same animal on the canvas of a Landseer. He was a successful poet before he became a novelist, and on this great and necessary acquisition he speaks in the following exquisite passage.

"Every successful novelist must be more or less a poet, even although he may never have written a line of verse. The quality of imagination is absolutely indispensable to him: his accurate power of examining and embodying human character and human passion, as well as the external face of nature, is not less essential; and the talent of describing well what he feels with acuteness, added to the above requisites, goes far to complete the poetic character. Smollett was, even in the ordinary sense which limits the name to those who write verses, a poet of distinction; and, in this particular,

superior to Fielding, who seldom aims at more than a slight translation from the classics. Accordingly, if he is surpassed by Fielding in moving pity, the northern novelist soars far above him in his powers of exciting terror. Fielding has no passages which approach in sublimity to the robber-scene in 'Count Fathom,' or to the terrible description of a sea-engagement, in which Roderick Random sits chained and exposed upon the poop, without the power of motion or exertion, during the carnage of a tremendous engagement. Upon many other occasions Smollett's descriptions ascend to the sublime; and, in general, there is an air of romance in his writings, which raise his narratives above the level and easy course of ordinary life. He was, like a pre-eminent poet of our own day, a searcher of dark bosoms, and loved to paint characters under the strong agitation of fierce and stormy passions. Hence, misanthropes, gamblers, and duellists, are as common in his works, as robbers in those of Salvator Rosa, and are drawn, in most cases, with the same terrible truth and effect."

The "pre-eminent poet" Sir Walter speaks of, is Lord Byron, whose excellence in painting the darker passions none will deny; but, where, let me ask, with one or two rare exceptions,

has the author of "Childe Harolde," drawn anything approaching the loveable creations of the author of Waverley, or displayed those touches of nature which make all mankind kindred? I grant the beauty of Haidee in "Don Juan," but a thousand times do I prefer that perfect woman, Jeanie Deans, in the "Heart of Mid Lothian." I marvel much that these exquisite essays have not been dwelt upon by his biographer, than whom no one could have commented upon them so exquisitely. To me it is like hearing Sir Walter Scott talk, and while dwelling on them, I could again fancy that I was walking beside him in the woods of Abbotsford, and listening to his opinion of Fielding and Smollett; and, to have such an opinion, is, in my idea, to possess something of far greater value than any review that was ever written by any editor in the palmiest days of periodical reviewing. I much regret that this task has not fallen into abler hands, for I feel that in mine they are but—

"Loose pearls at random strung."

By way of finish, however, I must quote the following passage, in which he places the genius of Fielding and Smollett side by side, in clear contrast, and on which he thus delivers judgment:—

“It is, however, chiefly in his profusion, which amounts almost to prodigality, that we recognise the superior richness of Smollett’s fancy. He never shows the least desire to make the most either of a character, or a situation, or an adventure, but throws them together with a carelessness which argues unlimited confidence in his own powers. Fielding pauses to explain the principles of his art, and to congratulate himself and his readers on the felicity with which he constructs his narratives, or makes his characters evolve themselves in the progress. These appeals to the reader’s judgment, admirable as they are, have sometimes the fault of being diffuse, and always the great disadvantage, that they remind us we are perusing a work of fiction ; and that the beings with whom we have been conversant during the perusal, are but a set of evanescent phantoms, conjured up by a magician for our amusement. Smollett seldom holds communion with his readers in his own person ; he manages his delightful puppet-show without thrusting his head beyond the curtain, like Gimes de Passamonte, to explain what he is doing ; and hence, beside that our attention to the story remains unbroken, we are sure that the author, fully confident in the abundance of his materials

has no occasion to eke them out with intrinsic matter.

“Smollett's sea-characters have been deservedly considered as inimitable; and the power with which he has diversified them, in so many instances distinguishing the individual features of each honest tar, while each possesses a full proportion of professional manners and habits of thinking, is a most absolute proof of the richness of fancy with which the author was gifted, and which we have noticed as his chief advantage over Fielding. Bowling, Trunnion, Hatchway, Pipes, and Crowe are all men of the same class, habits, and tone of thinking, yet so completely differenced by their separate and individual characters, that we at once acknowledge them as distinct persons, while we see and allow that every one of them belongs to the old English navy. These striking portraits have now the merit which is cherished by antiquaries; they preserve the memory of the school of Benbow and Boscawen, whose manners are now banished from the quarter-deck to the fore-castle. The naval officers of the present day, the splendour of whose actions has thrown into shadow the exploits of a thousand years, do not now affect the manners of a fore-mastman, and have shown

how admirably well their duty can be discharged without any particular attachment to tobacco and flip, or the decided preference of a check-shirt over a linen one.

“ In the comic part of their writings, we have already said, Fielding is pre-eminent in grave irony—a Cervantic species of pleasantry, in which Smollett is not equally successful. On the other hand, the Scotchman (notwithstanding the general opinion denies that quality to his countrymen) excels in broad and ludicrous humour. His fancy seems to run riot in accumulating ridiculous circumstances one upon another, to the utter destruction of all power of gravity; and perhaps no books ever excited such peals of inextinguishable laughter as those of Smollett. The description which affects us thus powerfully, borders sometimes upon what is called farce, or caricature; but if it be the highest praise of pathetic composition, that it draws forth tears, why should it not be esteemed the greatest excellence of the ludicrous that it compels laughter? The one tribute is, at least, as genuine an expression of natural feeling as the other; and he who can read the calamities of Trunnion and Hatchway, when, run away with by their mettled steeds, or the inimitable absurdities of the feast of the ancients, without

a good hearty burst of laughter, must be well qualified to look sad and gentlemanlike with Lord Chesterfield or Master Stephen.

“Upon the whole, the genius of Smollett may be said to resemble that of Rubens. His pictures are often deficient of grace—sometimes coarse, and even vulgar in conception ; deficient, too, in keeping ; and in the due subordination of the parts to each other, and intimating too much carelessness on the part of the artist. But these faults are redeemed by such richness and brilliancy of colours ; such a profusion of imagination—now bodying forth the good and terrible—now the natural, the easy, and the ludicrous. There is so much of life, action, and bustle, in every group he has painted ; so much force and individuality of character, that we really grant to Smollett an equal rank to his great rival Fielding, while we place both far above any of their successors in the same line of fictitious composition.”

All must admire the modesty of the last sentence ; though, as in the case of “Scouring the Brasses,” none but Sir Walter would have written it. We have but to run over the titles of his own novels in our minds, to feel convinced that he stands as far above either Fielding or Smollett, as they stood above their predecessors.



But there is no allusion to any of the Waverley novels in the whole of these beautiful essays. I am sure I shall be thanked by many for again bringing them forward, and I only regret that this imperfect little essay has not fallen into abler hands, who could do that justice to the great Author, which I cannot.

## CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW ROMANCE BY THE "AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY," FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME IT WAS NARRATED BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, IN MY PRESENCE.

SIR WALTER once said, while overlooking a village at the foot of the Eildon Hills, "If one could look into the heart of that little cluster of cottages, no fear but that you would find material for tragedy as well as comedy. I undertake to say there is some real romance at this moment going on down there, that if it could have justice done it, would be worth all the fiction that was ever spun out of human brains." "He then told us a tale," continues his biographer, "of dark domestic guilt, which had recently come under his notice as sheriff, and of which the scene was not Melrose, but a smaller hamlet on the other side of the Tweed, full in our view;" but the details were not of a kind to be dwelt upon; anything more dreadful was never conceived by Crabbe, and he told it so as to produce on us who listened, all the effect of another "HALL OF JUSTICE." This

anecdote is told by Lockhart, who, however, makes no further mention of the tale Sir Walter related, after having excited our curiosity to the highest pitch. Crabbe's "Hall of Justice," as it ought to be, is well known, and a most harrowing story it is ; unsurpassed, perhaps, in the English language, excepting by our greatest Dramatist. I have often wondered whether the story thus alluded to bore any resemblance to the one which I once heard Sir Walter narrate while seated on the stem of a tree he had just felled in the Abbotsford woods. It was, I well remember, drawing to the close of a spring evening, when the trees were putting forth their tender green, and that the elements on the previous night had been wild and unruly, and I think it was while making some remarks on the storm which had blown down several young trees, that he introduced the following tale. Of course I do not presume to give anything like the language in which the story was told, for in this art the great Minstrel stood alone ; all I shall throw together will be the incidents, as I wrote them down from memory, on that memorable night, and the following day. The scene, Sir Walter said, was in Germany, and the form of trial well known. It was as follows :—

Once upon a time, when a person was suspected of having committed murder, it was customary to prolong the investigation from day to day, from week to week, month to month, and year to year. The suspected murderer never received warning, as to when the examination was to take place; it might be as soon as he arose in the morning, or the summons might reach him in the midst of his meals, or more startling still, he might be awoke from his midnight sleep, without a moment's notice, to stand before the dreaded tribunal. His life was never taken until he confessed he was guilty, and to hasten this confession they had recourse to every artifice, kept a record of every word uttered, and chronicled every look. He was not allowed to converse with any one, not a witness was examined in his presence, his accusers never appeared before him, until he had all but acknowledged his guilt. Sometimes he would be taken out of prison to the very spot where the murder had been perpetrated, or led suddenly into the presence of the bleeding body, or confronted with the mouldering remains; and this would occur again and again, until the victim, whether innocent or guilty, at last preferred death to this cruel iteration, and unceasing mental torture.

I think Sir Walter told me it was in Germany where these terrible trials were held, and in the Black Forest where the murder was committed.

Herman Bickle was a forester, under one of the German Counts, and paid his addresses to Anna, the chief forester's only daughter. Herman had been absent on some duty, and came rather late to the rural merry-making, where he had appointed to meet the forester's fair daughter. When he arrived he found her dancing with some young man, and instead of accosting her, he sat down upon the bench under a broad-branched linden-tree, where he drank his beer and smoked his pipe in silence. Some of his neighbours joked him about his rival, who continued dancing with Anna, though they observed that her eyes were never off the young forester and that she looked very pale and unhappy. When the dancing had ceased, she went and sat down under a tree, on the opposite side of the green, to where Herman was seated. Like many a youthful beauty, she was too proud to make the first approach towards a reconciliation, and so they sat apart without exchanging a word, until the day was fast drawing to a close, and many of the party were retiring.

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What followed no one knew until next morning ; it was growing dark when they were last seen entering a gloomy avenue of the Black Forest, in the direction of the lodge where Anna resided, and midway between the skirts of the forest and her home she was found murdered, beside a sullen lake, rendered blacker by the shadows of the overhanging pines. The spot where she was found was wild and solitary, and some distance from the common forest-path that led to the lodge. But she seemed to have gone there of her own accord, as there was no sign of broken branches, nor of the underwood having been torn up, or of a body having been trailed over the broad-fern or tall forest-grass ; nothing to tell that force had been used in her passage from the beaten-track to the edge of the sullen lake ; neither did the body show any marks of violence, beyond a dark bruise on each side of the neck, one which might have been made by the tree-root on which her neck rested when she fell, and which ran for some distance like a thick cable above the earth, as is common with huge old trees. The mark on the opposite side looked suspicious ; it might be pressure or it might be a blow, or caused by the force with which she fell on the knotted and iron root, which would perchance force



the blood that side; such a thing was just possible.

Sir Walter spoke of this as after-evidence, for there were skilful men present at the examination of the body, who did not hesitate to assert, that a fall on so hard a body as the root, and so vital a part as the neck, would cause death, especially on the part affected coming in contact. I was not sufficiently skilled in anatomy to understand the reasons Sir Walter gave.

The night had turned out stormy, with thunder, lightning, wind, and rain. The boughs of the old forest-trees groaned again, as if in agony, as they echoed back the deep-mouthed thunder, while the vivid glare revealed every opening between the branches, and the wind

“Blew, as ’twould hae blawn its last,”

while the rain tumbled down in mountain torrents. And amid this turmoil of the elements the father and his assistant foresters, with the exception of Herman, were out with lights in search of Anna.

Superstitions, dark as the gloomiest glens in the ancient forests, are believed in by the inhabitants who live in the adjacent neighbour-

hoods; they have fiends for wood and water, good and evil spirits for the sylvan shades, and sylvan streams, who watch over constancy, and punish perjured lovers, as they are believed to have done from the earliest times, by even the most barbarous nations. The lake in the Black Forest by which Anna was found dead, had, time out of mind, had its water-sprite. On the following morning, when they heard of Anna having been found dead by the ominous lake, they recalled to memory the young student she was dancing with on the previous evening, the silence and unhappiness of Herman, the dreadful storm that suddenly came down after the close of a bright day, and believed that the black marks on her neck had been made by the grasp of the water fiend, and that she had been punished for flirting with the young student. Herr Ritter, a humble youth who held some situation under Anna's father, and who was out searching for her on that awful night, believed that he saw the fiend hurrying away with the maiden over the tree-tops, that he held her by the hair, and let her drop just over the lake through a broad blue flash of lightning; and Herr Ritter's old grandmother believed what he said to be true, and so did many a grey old gossip, to whom she made known—with many additions

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of her own,—all her grandson said, of what he had seen and heard.

Meantime Herman was a prisoner, and either was, or pretended to be, ignorant of the death of Anna. When brought before the UNTERSUCHUNGS' RICHTER, or judge, and asked if he knew for what crime he was arrested, he answered that he did not. Only the judge and a notary, or clerk, were present, the latter to take down his answers. They did not even tell him of the crime he was accused of at the first examination, nor make any allusion to the death of the Forester's daughter; indeed the name of Anna was never mentioned at all, neither was there any allusion to the events of the preceding day. The questions put to Herman had nothing to do with the subject of Anna's death, but were so calculated to mislead him, that any one present would have supposed that he had been guilty of some neglect of duty, some trespass of vert or venison connected with the Forest lands. At the close of the examination he was warned of the sinfulness of falsehood, and the advantage he might hope to gain by telling the truth, and then for that day the investigation closed.

I think Sir Walter mentioned that the young man had been taken out of his bed, in the first

grey dawn of morning, and at the very hour the body of Anna was discovered, and that the officers had strict commands not to utter a word, in allusion to the murder he was supposed to have committed, nor to breathe even an allusion to the maiden's name. Much do I regret that I cannot carry on the examination, from day to day, as Sir Walter narrated it, throwing in those little touches of his own to deepen the approaching horrors, and sometimes rising up, and walking to and fro in the excitement, then again, as his voice became subdued, tapping the fallen tree with his staff, as if timing each musical cadence, while I sat breathless, and saw only the victim, the judge, and the notary, the silent prison, and heard in fancy the continued scratching of the pen, and every line that added to the prisoner's condemnation.

After the lapse of many months, and when the prisoner had become acquainted with all that was known of the circumstances connected with Anna's death, and when he himself had many times stated that they parted in anger, about the middle of the forest avenue, and without bidding her good night, he left her to return to the lodge alone. After this, he was left sometimes for a week, without undergoing further examination.

So time went on until the evening of the anniversary of her death. It was a year on that very night, and while he lay on his hard pallet brooding over the past, he was suddenly summoned, as the prison clock tolled the hour of midnight, to appear again before the judge. After admonishing him as usual, and holding out hope to him in the mysterious hereafter, if he would confess to the murder; also a promise that time enough should be given him for repentance, and that the Church should come to his aid with all her holiest prayers; the judge received only the usual denials, accompanied by a shake of the head, as the prisoner still protested his innocence. There was a silence, still as death, for several seconds. Then the judge raised a black cloth, which covered the table that stood before him, and lo! the head of the Forester's daughter rested on a cushion, the hair parted just as she wore it, the lips apart, and scarcely any change had taken place excepting that the eyes were closed. Herman gazed upon it, pale, affrighted, and speechless; his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and his whole form was bathed in a cold perspiration. The beautiful white teeth, which had so often been admired, showed like fresh May-buds between the open and pallid lips, and so well had the head been preserved, by

some art known to the German physicians, that the features had undergone but little change. "That," said the judge, "is the head of the once beautiful Anna, that might to-night have been resting on your bosom, in her sleep, a fond and faithful wife, but for your evil and jealous passion." The sound of the judge's voice seemed to act upon Herman like a spell; he recovered himself in an instant, and looking at the head, smiled, as he said—"Could those lips but speak, they would say that 'Herman was my dear friend, had loved me, even when I made him jealous; on the night we parted in anger he still loved me; and after I turned away, he sat down beside a tree in the Black Forest, alone to weep;'" then, he added, as if with a painful effort, "'he went home, and before retiring to rest, knelt down, and prayed I might become his for ever.'"

"Wilt thou swear that thou speakest but the truth?" said the judge, "and confirm thine oath by pressing those cold and lifeless lips to thine own?"

"I will," answered the prisoner, and stepped up before the head as he spoke; and when he was in the act of kneeling to press the lips, and as his chin rested upon the cushion a scream, so loud, shrill, awful, and unearthly, came from

them, that he sank upon the floor exclaiming, "Guilty, guilty, guilty!"

I think Sir Walter said that he found the outline of the story in some untranslated work of German Criminal Trials; but as I have never heard of such a book, nor met with any one who ever heard of it, I thought I ought to give it as one of the author of Waverley's oral romances, and the only one I took the pains to preserve, as nearly as possible as it was delivered, so far as my memory supplied me. I do not say that I have copied it faithfully word for word, from the notes I made at the time I heard it, for I had not then that knowledge of writing which I now possess. I have, however, given the whole of the ideas, as I received them, and put them in the best language I could command, fully believing no other man, saving Sir Walter Scott himself, could clothe them in such fitting words, or throw around the whole story such an air of terror, as that with which he delivered it, partly sitting and partly standing, beside the fallen tree in the classical plantation of Abbotsford.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## MY LAST PILGRIMAGE ROUND ABBOTSFORD.

ABBOTSFORD, situated on the banks of the Tweed, has long been an object of attraction to travellers; neither has it lost any of its interest through the lapse of years, but is still the resort of pilgrim tourists from all regions, for the associations connected with it are of a high and intellectual description. At a period when the spirit of the nation was stirred by great deeds abroad, the Waverley Novels, with their splendid pictures of old times, came appropriately; they seemed like a magical reproduction of the past; as if some wizard had put flesh and blood within the long disused armour with which our noble galleries are hung, and instilled new life into the shadowy forms of chivalry. Though the great magician himself is now no longer among us to delight and amuse by his splendid writings, still his works and his memory will live while the English language is spoken, his lofty genius be admired, and his great name cherished as

the mightiest creator that ever sat on "the shores of old romance." Few places are thought and spoken of with more interest than Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott, and rarely has the world ever seen a more loveable character, a more warm and simple-hearted man, or one on whom all the graces of a Christian sat so meekly, quietly, and becomingly.

I again trod in the footprints of my boyhood, and passed up Bow-Butts brae, while the snow-balling scene and the blacksmith came vividly across my mind, and once more stood before the entrance of the old playground. The gate, now broken off its hinges, had a dilapidated look, and as I crossed and placed my hand upon the latch, again opening that door which I had so often entered as a scholar, upwards of a quarter of a century ago, I cast my eyes over the old schoolroom, and all seemed unchanged, saving the once familiar faces which formerly greeted me with a smiling welcome. Mr. Pollock, the master, approached, and, on learning the occasion of my visit, at once entered into the feelings which had brought me thither, again to reconnoitre the scenes of my youth; the positions of the desks were a little altered since the days of "barring out" which I have described, and when I

strolled into the garden, where still stood the oft-plundered pear-tree, I saw that the old sun-dial remained unchanged in the centre walk. As I stood musing, I almost fancied I was only waiting until meal time again to see my old companions tread that very spot where we had made merry in the years now long passed away. Alas! how many of those young and animal spirits which I had been accustomed to meet, day by day, and whose names were once so familiar to me, were now no more!

I turned away and again visited each well remembered spot in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford; my first halt was with the old ferry-man at Boldside. In allusion to the Tweed my driver said, "She's awfu' big the day, mon," while the old boatman remarked, "that Tweed waur in full flood for the first time this season." I learned from him, if its tributaries, Ettrick and Yarrow, continued turbid and swollen, there would be some good fishing; and, said he, "the quantity of fine fish to be seen on a mild evening, in any still pool, feeding greedily on the natural insect waur astonishing." It appeared that while thus engaged, scarcely any lure, however well imitated, will tempt them to forsake their usual food, and that the most carefully-dressed



hooks sweep unheeded through the sheets of boiling foam-bells which rise from the fry beneath, that at such times swim almost on the surface. I had previously learned at Galashiels, that while scarcely a border stream of any note, has not witnessed the erection of woollen factories on its banks within the last twenty years, Tweed has, until now, been free from all such buildings. Its limpid waters pursue their way from their source to Berwick uncontaminated by dye-stuffs and scourings of the factories, saving from some of its tiny tributaries which disappear as soon as they are engulfed in its broad bosom.

The lordly salmon still breasts his upward way in all the glitter of silver mail, to lay his fair bulk under the venerable shades of the ancestral beeches of Yair, or lurk in deeper depths below the mouldering walls of Needpath, of which Sir Walter has sung in his own beautiful autumnal musings,

“No more beneath the evening beam,  
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam,  
Away hath passed the heather-bell  
That bloomed so rich on Needpath-fell,  
Sallow his brow, and russet bare  
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.”

But the day is near when the waters of the

"Queen of the South" are destined, like many of her dependants, to serve other purposes than "beilding" the salmon and trout, or merely affording sport, as in days gone by to all those who "cast angle in the brook." They are to be devoted to purposes more useful to man, and must drudge for his support by turning the "dizzying mill-wheel" round from day to day, as a large woollen factory will ere long be erected on the Tweed, at Caberston, near Innerleithen, to be called the Tweedside Mill, with cottages for the hinds, and other premises.

Bowhill, the residence of the Duke of Buccleugh, overhanging the Yarrow with its high-up, cairn-topped hills, and beautiful avenue of trees, is a delightful spot; and should my readers journey thitherward, and want refreshment for man and horse on returning, I beg of them to take the upper road to Selkirk, and call at the Ship Inn, facing Sir Walter Scott's monument, where they can "hae a bit crack" with the hostess, a perfect pattern of Meg Dodds. While standing at the door, this far-famed Mrs. Clappercleugh made her appearance with "It's a saft day, the day." I said, "yes, it has been raining." It appeared that the good dame had only returned on the previous evening from London, and she

at once commenced about all she had heard and seen during a "sax weeks'" residence there. "I never saw sic a muckle deal o' fashing as there waur tae get about the streets, nor sic an awfu' muckle kirk as that wi' a round tap an' a gold cross on it, ye mind." "St. Paul's Cathedral," I remarked. "I'e, ye ken fine whar I mean, they tauld me the folk loupit frae the tap o' it." "Crazy people occasionally threw themselves from the monument, before it was covered over with an iron grating," I replied. "I'e, they tauld me that tae, I mind it fine." Mrs. Clappercleugh had evidently returned laden with rather mistaken notions of the "Mysteries of London."

It appeared the old lady had been to the Sydenham Exhibition; for, said she, "It's a bonnie braw biggin yon Crustal Paillaice, the like o' it I never saw before; I canna tell how they biggit it; I should be afraid o' the laddies thraving stanes an' bringing it a' doon about my lugs, an' I bided in it;" and she thought it "must hae cost a haffin of money." Dame Clappercleugh had proved one of Fortune's favourites in being present on an occasion when, as they told her, "that bonnie wi' body the Queen waur there." "Ae, mon," she said, "she's a bonnie lassie yon, tae hae sae little pride about her, as tae mix wi' sicken bodies as

my ainsel', Mrs. Clappercleugh wha keepit a tavern at Selkirk;" and when the old dame had arrived at the end of a laugh which was really "pro-di-gi-ous," and in which it was impossible to help joining, she said, "Did ye ever see sic bonnie braw things as they hae gotten yon, I wonder whar they a' cam' frae, I went but an' ben, frae ae place tae anither, an' I declare there waur nae end o't." Just then the gig drew up to the door, and put an end to Dame Clappercleugh's further dialogue; the horse did not move off very quietly at first, and the worthy hostess fancying it was the youth Sandy's fault who held the reins, displayed a tolerable pair of lungs when she called out, "The callant's surely daft, ye gowk, ye, why do ye no mind what yer aboot, do ye want tae whummel the gig o'er?" and seizing the horse's bridle she led him to the middle of the road, while I waved my hand for her kind deliverance; The driver, looking round to see if he was beyond ear-shot, dryly remarked, "A queer body, yon;" "Has plenty to say," I replied. "She'd maist talk ye blind," said he, "she cam ben the stables an' spiered whar I cam' frae, I tauld her frae Galashiels, 'O, I'e,' says she, 'and wha hae ye gotten?' 'I dinna ken,' says I; 'hae he been here before,' says

she; 'I dinna mind, but I think no,' says I; 'then he'll think the mair o't, and cam again,' says she; then she gae me a gripe o' the collar an' tauld me tae had awa in tae the house an' get my dinner, for I lookit as though I needed it."

We had by this time arrived at Abbotsford: the carriage entrance, as described at page 18, is now closed to the public. Continuing the angle of the wall on the left hand, you come to a door, which, in Sir Walter's time, was the servants' entrance, and over it is still seen the carved head of the facetious Tom Purdie, to which Peter Mathieson, Sir Walter's old coachman, drew my attention by saying, "that's the best likeness o' Tom that I ever saw; it waur cut by Mr. Smith, o' Darnick, wha chiselled the figure-head o' Captain Ormiston again the arch o' the vegetable garden, which aiblins, ye ken, is the original o' Sir Walter's Captain Clutterbuck, an' yon's a guide likeness o' the Captain, but Tom's is the best o' the twa, an' if ye mind he had a mole on his cheek, an' if ye look intill'd, ye can see it in the stane; Sir Walter waur verra kind tae Tom; an' when he waur buried Sir Walter lowered his head intil the grave wi' his ain hands," and the poor old man turned away to conceal his emotion.

The visitors' entrance is by a wicket opening from the high road, and leading down by a narrow pathway past a cottage, formerly the gardener's, but now Ormond's residence, the man who shows the house. From this point a fine view is obtained of the gardens, on the left, through the beautiful screen of arches; at the bottom of the pathway, you see written upon a board, "The way to the house," and opening a cross-barred door, you enter a square court-yard, on the left of where stands a variety of grotesque figures in niches along the wall, which, at the further end, forms an angle, and runs up to the carriage entrance. On your right hand lies the flower garden, seen through a beautiful wire screen formed between a line of arches above mentioned, and which are ornamented with grotesque heads, flowers, &c., cut in the stone work, and running on to the flag-staff end of the house, which forms the fourth angle. The old fountain, that many a time flowed with wine when it stood in its grey antiquity before its removal to Abbotsford from Edinburgh, stands in the centre of the lawn, a beautiful picturesque object, surrounded with solemn associations.

Before the hall door there is a finely cut figure of Maida, in a recumbent position, exe-

cuted by Mr. Smith, and the block of stone out of which it was formed was used in Sir Walter's time as a leaping-on-stone, and the figure had been placed there about twelve months before the dog died ; so great a likeness is it, that any one who had seen the noble animal, and then looked upon the figure, would at once acknowledge the skill of the artist. Sir Walter, in writing to his son Charles, says, " Old Maida died suddenly in his straw last week, after a good supper, which, considering his weak state, was rather a deliverance ; he is buried below his monument, on which the following epitaph is engraved in Latin, thus Englished by an eminent hand :—

"Beneath the sculptured form which late you bore,  
Sleep soundly Maida at your master's door."

You enter the hall by a beautifully painted glass door, and the attention is at once arrested by several cannon-balls and knick-knackeries of various kinds, but the object of greatest interest to strangers are the garments worn by Sir Walter Scott, and which are reverentially preserved in a case with a glass top, that stands under the farthest window ; it contains a white hat, a green single breasted coat with metal buttons, and a plaid waistcoat, with trousers of the

same pattern, also a pair of stout made shoes, and a walking stick: the coat is deficient of the two top buttons, which, I regret to say, were stolen by some unprincipled visitor before the clothes were secured in their present situation; in consequence of this disgraceful theft the case has ever since been kept locked.

Leaving the hall you enter the lobby, on the left hand of which, stand three figures in Indian war dresses, and quitting this recess you come into the study; the desk still stands, in the centre as described at page 30, and also the black leathern arm chair. Beside the desk is a chair presented to Sir Walter by Joseph Train, which bears on a brass plate the following inscription: "This chair made of the only remaining wood of the house at Robroyston, in which the matchless Sir William Wallace

'Was done to death by felon hand,  
For guarding well his father land,'

is most respectfully presented to Sir Walter Scott," &c.

Above, is a gallery of iron tracery work, running round two sides, and containing a few books, chiefly for reference; in the right hand corner of the gallery, a door leads into a



passage and by it Sir Walter could at any time enter to or from his chamber; leaving the study you reach the library, which is the largest room in the house; the winged-door bookcases are protected by cross wire work, instead of glass, and on the right, stands a beautiful marble bust of Sir Walter Scott, by Chantry, said to be a very correct likeness; the urn and bones presented by Byron, a bust of Shakspeare, and Sir Walter's eldest son in his hussar uniform, beautifully painted, are also in this apartment; at the further end of the room stands a lectern, used by Sir Walter as a reference table, on which he placed his books; it has four sides, and moves round by a gentle touch, thus affording facilities for reference without rising, when the books were once arranged upon it. From the library you pass into the drawing room, adorned with pictures, one, the head of Queen Mary, before mentioned; you then enter the armoury and ante-room, separated by a low-railed hatchway, which I have before described; the ante-room is filled with weapons, and dresses of war brought from India by Sir Walter's eldest son. You are next ushered into the dining room, lined with interesting family portraits; the first on the right, next the door, is Sir Walter's

. great grandfather, Old Beardie, who allowed his beard to grow after the execution of Charles I. ; next him, Sir Walter's grandfather, then his father and mother in their wedding dresses, followed by that of Sir Walter himself, taken at eight years of age ; facing these, and on the opposite side of the room, is Sir Walter's mother in her old age. The affection that existed betwixt mother and son, is beautifully shown in the following extract from Lockhart's life of Scott : " There is in the library at Abbotsford a fine copy of Baskerville's folio Bible, two vols., printed at Cambridge in 1763, and there appears on the blank leaf, in the trembling handwriting of Scott's mother, this inscription, '*To my dear son, Walter Scott, from his affectionate mother, Anne Rutherford, January 1st, 1819,*' under these words her son has written as follows, '*This Bible was the gift of my grandfather, Dr. John Rutherford, to my mother, and presented by her to me, being, alas ! the last gift which I was to receive from that excellent parent, and, as I verily believe, the thing she most loved in the world,—not only in humble veneration of the sacred contents, but as the dearest pledge of her father's affection to her ; as such she gave it to me, and as such I bequeath it to those who*

may represent me,—charging them carefully to preserve the same, in memory of those to whom it has belonged, 1820.” Beyond the portrait of Sir Walter’s mother there is a small well-executed likeness of Tom Purdie sitting upon a chair with his plaid across his shoulder and a gun resting upon his knee, he is drawn bare-headed; further on hangs a capital likeness of old Peter Mathieson, Sir Walter’s coachman, holding the favourite pony named Donald, which Sir Walter rode in his latter years: Donald, like Peter, was an old and faithful servant, and only died in 1850. Next to Peter hangs John Swanston, Sir Walter’s faithful woodman, and manager of the saw mills at Huntly, and who was Tom Purdie’s successor; John is a fine shot, and is drawn with a gun in his hand, while his foot rests upon a tree, which he appears to have just felled; by his side is his favourite dog, Dandy Dinmont, and, as John said to me as he whistled the dog from under his arm-chair, patting the animal on the head, as he sat in a snug corner of his neat little cottage at Huntly, while over his head hung several guns resting on hooks in the ceiling beam, “I had an awfu’ job wi’ ye, had I no’, Dandy,” and raising himself, added, “he didna like being

in ae position sae lang at ae time" John continued ; " he's a fine dog for the gun, I've only, tae tak' down the powder-flask and Dandy's out by at yon corner, waiting tae see whether I'm gaun o'er Bowden Moor, or tae the plantain below Chiefswood ;" Dandy is a fine specimen of the thorough Liddesdale breed. Peter and John are now the only servants living that were in the employ of Sir Walter Scott, and their portraits were painted at the expense of Mr. Hope (Scott), the present proprietor of Abbotsford, which shows the high respect he entertains for the domestics of his gifted relative. From this room you are again ushered into the hall, where visitors first enter, and sign your name in a book before leaving. Such was Abbotsford at my last pilgrimage in 1854.

I must again carry my visitors along with me to that venerable ruin, Melrose Abbey. There are a few houses on each side the road leading to the entrance, and the print shop at the left hand corner, is the residence of the widow of the late Johnny Bowers, a very homely, most respectable and communicative cannie kind o' body. Strangers should visit her before entering the Abbey, as they will meet with much information which will interest, and be of great service to them while going over

the ruins ; Mrs. Bowers has innumerable prints, and many very interesting casts of various parts of the Abbey in plaster of Paris, which she keeps on the first floor. On the right as you enter, is a window looking on to the Abbey, and along the top are five castings in plaster ; the centre one a wild boar, respecting which she relates a curious anecdote, that I do not now remember ; the two on each side are fac-similes of flowers from the cloisters of the Abbey ; on a table in front of this window are two busts, one of Sir Walter Scott, the other of Captain Ormiston, the Captain Clutterbuck of the Monastery, taken from the head already described as being in the garden at Abbotsford ; beneath the table are several castings of flowers, heads, &c. ; one of the heads was taken from the top part of the south side of the Abbey, as far back as the time when the scaffolding was erected during the repairs which Sir Walter superintended. The head represents an old man in the agonies of death, with his mouth wide open, showing one large tooth on each side in the upper jaw ; there is also the armorial bearings of the Abbot Andrew Hunter, consisting of two crosiers or pastoral staves in saltier, and three hunting horns, with a rose in chief, and a mallet at base, and the initials

A. H. There are several niches containing figures, one an effigy of St. Andrew, another of the Virgin Mary bearing the child Jesus in her arms; over the fireplace there are also castings, both from the Abbey and from Abbotsford, and on the right, hangs an engraving of Sir Walter and his dog Bran, rendered more interesting from having a lock of the great minstrel's hair affixed to it; to the left of the fireplace is a door, over which there are several castings, one is a cluster of fir cones, very beautifully executed.

Mrs. Bower referred me next door for the key to admit me to the ruins. I was answered by a man about sixty years of age, who seemed to guess my errand, and without speaking immediately retired in doors, and returned with his hat, his stick, and a key. I said, jocosely, "Are you a descendant of *the* Johnny Bower?" He raised his stooping shoulders, and looking me full in the face replied, "Eh! na mon, I'm no a Johnny Bower, I'm a Johnny Scott," and thrusting the key into the lock which grated "harsh thunder," opened the door and then re-locked it, when we were inside. Johnny Scott is certainly an original, and well suited to fill up such a gap as his predecessor, the eccentric Johnny Bower, has left. Having

already described Melrose Abbey, I need but remark, that the entrance is now covered with grass, which Johnny began to beat with his stick while he directed my attention to the seven chapels or baptistries on the south, or right hand as you enter, four of which are now roofless; he also pointed out marks of the bases of altars, and recesses in the partition wall. Several of these chapels have been used as burial places, in each there is a piscina, and as one of them contained water, I asked Johnny Scott, if it were some of the holy water still remaining. "I dinna ken, but what that's just as 'holy' as the water they put in tae the hole in thae monkish days," said my puritanical guide, who seemed to have but little reverence for those "gray forefathers." The first aisle is occupied as a burial ground of the ancient family of the Bostons. In the third aisle there is a tombstone on which is engraved a monastic figure in the attitude of prayer, together with an inscription. The fourth aisle is the burying place of the Pringles of Whytebanks. The fifth of the Pringles of Galashiels. The effigy of the Baron of Smailholm is seen wrapped in his grave-clothes. In the sixth aisle is the tomb of David Fletcher, a minister of Melrose congregation, bearing the date 1665; and in

the seventh aisle or division next the transept, is a bevel-topped stone about a foot from the ground, seeming as if made for the convenience of kneeling upon, with these words engraved in Saxon characters, ORATE PRO ANIMA FRATRIS PETRI ÆRARIJ, which means, "Pray for the soul of brother Peter the treasurer." Johnny Scott went on describing and repeating the different descriptions on the separate tombs, in such broad Scotch, that it was really difficult to understand him. Crossing over to the Eastern or 'Prentice's window, so beautifully described by Sir Walter, who says,

"The moon on the east oriel shone  
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,  
By foliated tracery combined ;  
Thou would'st have thought some fairy hand  
'Twixt poplars straight, the osier wand  
In many a freakish knot had twined,  
Then framed a spell when the work was done,  
And changed the willow wreath to stone."

In the roof of the chancel, on the keystones, are some curiously carved figures ; while beneath lie the tombs of several illustrious men, among whom are William Douglass, the hero of Chevy Chace ; and beneath a small square stone, directly under the window, it is said, the heart of Bruce was deposited. Johnny Scott



pointed to a marble stone with petrified shells, beside the site of the altar, saying, this is the tomb of Alexander II., upon which the aged Monk and Deloraine sat until the clock struck twal (twelve). As Sir Walter has told us,

“They sat them down on a marble stone—  
A Scottish monarch slept below.”

And the tomb next this is the grave of Michael Scott, at the head of which, against the east wall, is a mysterious pile of stones bearing something the appearance of a broken figure. I asked Johnny if that was the effigy of Michael Scott; laughing, as his mouth seemed, to open from ear to ear, he replied, “Na, na, mon that’s ane o’ Johnny Bowers’ flams, ye ken. They are just three stanes ane a’ tap o’ t’ other, an’ the figure-head at the tap is nae mair than ane o’ the keystones, that’s fallen down, sae he put them a’ tap o’ ane anither and tauld the folk it waur the likeness o’ Michael Scott.” He then turned round, and pointed to an arched doorway leading from the cloisters, at the angle formed by the transept, saying “Yon’s the door Sir Walter hae tauld us a’ about in the ‘Lay o’ the Last Minstrel,’ whar the Monk and Deloraine came through.” And the vivid scene again passed, while I mused, before

my "inward eye." I could fancy I heard bold Deloraine at the Abbey gate knocking for admission, and that I saw the wicket open wide, and the porter standing "with torch in hand and foot unshod," lighting him through the arched cloisters which rang to the "clanking" of Deloraine's armour; could see him stooping low his crest as he entered the priest's cell to hail the old monk of St. Mary's aisle, and make known to him the Ladye of Branksome's desire "to win the treasure of the tomb." I seemed to see the old monk with stiffened limbs, thin locks, and floating beard, over which "a hundred years had thrown their snows," lead the way through the cloisters, followed by bold Deloraine, while "the moon on the east oriel shone," sit down on the petrified marble tomb, beneath which "a Scottish monarch slept;" fancied I could hear the old churchman relate how he first met Michael Scott, a wizard of such dreaded fame, in the far-off land of Panim, and listened to his magic lore in Salamanca's cave, and told him the words of glomarie, that clave the Eildon hills in three, when on his death-bed, and how the old monk swore to bury him with his mighty book, and never to divulge the secret to any one, save to his chief of Branksome, to

whom he was to restore the volume. I seemed to see the cross of red over the grave, the monk point to the secret nook, the bar of iron, and raise his withered hand as he made a sign to Deloraine to move the "massy" stone, and open the huge portal of the grave, while a blaze of light issued from the tomb, showing the pale and affrighted visage of the old monk, Deloraine meantime looking on the corpse of Michael Scott wrapped in a palmer's amice, while in his left hand he held the mighty book, and in his right, a silver cross, with the lighted lamp beside his knee, when he who had never before known remorse or awe, gasped heavily for breath, and became bewildered as he looked on the scene of death, and fancied he saw the dead man frown, when he took the iron-clasped and iron-bound book from his grasp. I seemed to see the huge stone sink over the grave, when they had finished their work, while the night grew dark as the moon went down, seemed to hear the wind blow, and the strange mingling of sobs and laughter ring through the cloister galleries as of fiends keeping holiday, when the old monk returned to his cell, and in prayer and penance craved forgiveness for the deed they had done, and how when the convent met at the noon-tide bell, the monk of St. Mary's

aisle was found dead, with his hands clasped, as if he still prayed : the whole seemed there to pass before me as I stood in silence.

I mentioned to Johnny Scott about Johnny Bowers' moonlight scene; he placed his hands on his sides, convulsed with laughter, saying, "Eh! mon, but that waur a bonnie braw trick, he just got a lanthorn we' a muckle cannel (candle) in it *weised* on a long pole, an' made a body believe it waur as guid as the bit min (moon); he waur a queer body that Johnny Bowers;" and dropping his voice in sympathy, he said,—“but he's gane home lang syne, rest his soul!”

We now passed under the semicircular arch leading to the cloisters, through which the monk and Deloraine entered the Abbey before-mentioned. The exquisitely finished capitals of the pilasters of this doorway, rival in elegance, anything throughout the whole building; there is a minuteness in its details, a study in the design, and a chasteness in the branches of foliage and flowers, which are so delicately perforated, that one could almost fancy nature had been superseded by art. In these beautifully deep-cut perforated mouldings, Johnny Scott keeps a straw to convince you, there is no deception in their perfect hollow-

ness, but says Johnny drily, "I canna say how they howkit (cut) them out."

The cloisters form a quadrangle on the north side of the Abbey and the capitals of the columns are carved with beautiful wreaths of flowers and plants such as oak-leaves, acorns, lilies, house-leek, and

"Spreading herbs and flowerets bright."

Johnny Scott drew my attention to the outer wall of the building saying, "Ye see yon broken stanes, that's whar Cromwell fired his cannon shot frae Gattonside hill, but the bonnie wa' waur proof agin a this king-killing ne'er-do-guid's powder and ball." The stones showed signs of having been shivered and broken, but were not misplaced. We returned to the transept, and passed out at the door to have a south-east view, which is reckoned the finest of the Abbey. The exterior of the eastern window is magnificent, it is divided from top to bottom by four upright mullions, that were, when erected, intersected near the middle by a cross bar; close to this is the stone erected over the grave of honest and faithful Tom Purdie.

John Swanston, whom I have before mentioned as Tom Purdie's successor, said to me, "I used

## NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MELROSE.

to leave the saw-mills and be at A every morning at twelve o'clock, to ac Sir Walter in his rides, and to att during his out-door rambles," for John other duties, managed the saw-mills at As the old man, with his numero accompanied me up the Rhymer's Glen side of the "Bogle Burn," he said, "time Sir Walter came up this glen wa his illness; some one had told him bank had fallen in, and dammed up t stream, and so anxious was he about it would not rest satisfied until he had e it himself."

And now we have before us one loveliest rides in the south of Scotlan still think there is no scenery to eq which lies between Melrose and D for beauty and interest. On Newst before entering the pretty little villa have the finest view of Melrose Crossing Leader-foot bridge, which s river Leader, so renowned in song, a the Tweed just below; on your righ lies Ravenswood House buried among the banks of the river. The road lie edge of the Tweed, which, at times, like a small rivulet running through

ravine, with plantations dipping down to the water's edge, and so high is the road crossing Bemerside hill, near Gladswood, that it commands a magnificent view of the Tweed as it rolls past a solitary house, the only remains of old Melrose. After crossing over hills and through valleys, you enter a narrow lane, at the foot of which runs the river Tweed, while to the left there is a small cottage, where you apply for the keys; on the right, a low gateway admits you into the grounds of Dryburgh Abbey; passing the residence, which is in good repair, a wooden fence runs round the remains of the old grey ruin; the radiated window is still beautiful, and covered with ivy; St. Mary's aisle, where Sir Walter Scott lies buried, is very perfect; in looking upon the aisle, the arch on the right hand is the resting place of Sir Walter Scott; he lies in the north wing of the burial place of the Haliburtons of Mertoun, an ancient family from whom he descended through Old Beardie, before mentioned. Within a foot of the iron railings lies young Sir Walter, next him Sir Walter; and next Sir Walter, and against the wall, lies his wife, Lady Scott; the stone is a flat four-cornered Peterhead granite; Sir Walter's is about three feet from the ground,

## TOMB OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

with this inscription, "Sir Walt Bart." There is nothing about it the stranger with surprise, except simplicity; but we think only of nobler feelings carry us back into the recollections of the past, to him who is buried there, and of the name engraved on that flat piece of polished granite, which is now an immortality of fame. Though he still speaketh; his presence fills the air. While looking upon it I felt a strangeness of the heart, and I could only find vent for my pent-up feelings by exclaiming, let— "Alas! poor Scott."

THE END.







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*From the Athenæum, No. 872, p. 645.*

We thought of “Yarrow,” and “Yarrow Revisited,” when reading the title. The poem itself, however, holds more of Gray than of Wordsworth, and strongly reminds us of the tone and style, both in sentiment and diction, of the celebrated Elegy. The author boasts of the friendship of Sir Walter Scott, and is, not without reason, proud of his appreciation. These poems are elegant, full of sweet rural images and pathetic meditations, introduced with taste and poetic feeling.

*From the Atlas, No. 941, p. 358.*

“Hawthorndale Village Revisited” contains many stanzas of great beauty. The feeling evinced throughout the composition is simple, unaffected, natural. The writer's style is formed on the model of the school of Gray and Rogers,—names that cannot be forgotten so long as taste and elegance in writing are appreciated.

*From the Court Journal, No. 788, p. 368.*

The author of “Hawthorndale Village Revisited” has the spirit of a poet,—at every point both true and earnest. The feelings to which the poem is addressed—those of a return, after years of absence, to the scenes of childhood—are delightfully portrayed; every word gushes from the writer's heart, and inspires the subject with much freshness. There is great originality of thought and strength of expression, which invests the familiar theme with a renewed interest. His simple and touching little poem called “The Woodman” is a picture from nature—rustic and unaffected; we wish we could make room for it. Here are a “few lines,” however, as a *souçon*. The poet is describing the solitary life of a woodman,—how he

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rises with the dawn, and goes into the old grey wood, and toileth alone all day ; and how he dwells till evening in that profound solitude, and never hears a human voice.

“ He has a deep and solemn mind  
Companion of the rain and wind,  
What is the world to him ?  
Nor war nor peace doth reach his ears,  
Nor wedding smiles nor funeral tears :  
The rings that marked the trees are years,  
And they grow dark and dim.  
Yet deem not he's without a smile,—  
‘ A Crusoe in his lonely isle,’—  
A bird without a mate ;  
He has a cottage in the vale,—  
The lane leads up to Hawthorndale :  
I've seen him when the day waxed pale  
Lean o'er his garden-gate.  
For though that man is old and poor,  
There's one waits for him at the door,  
When night looks down the sky :  
And up the long road, for a mile,  
Can she see path, and gate, and stile ;  
And when she sees him come, a smile  
Lights up her cheek and eye.”

The merit of these lines consists in their truthful simplicity; they go direct to the feelings. There are several other short pieces, of great merit to our Hawthorndale Villager.

*From the Literary Aspirant Magazine, No. 1, p. 112.*

It is something now-a-days for a reviewer to say that he has read a modern poem *twice* through ; yet this is the case with the elegant little volume before us. We will frankly say that we have done so with real delight ; for “ Hawthorndale Village Revisited ” is a production which blends graphic description with touches of pathos, and a sustained style of polished harmony. The tone and vein of thought are much akin to Gray's imperishable *Elegy*.—Every reader we think cannot fail to be struck by this,—

*“The pearl-flushed hawthorns scent the Summer air,  
And streak with lines of white the vale below :  
One might forget this world contained a care,  
Viewing this scene—feeling this fragrance blow.”*

The lines we have marked in *italics* we conceive to be a bit of genuine natural poetry, which, in these times of steam and twaddle, is as refreshing to us as the “breath of the sweet south” to the panting way-worn traveller. That line,

*“ And streak with lines of white the vale below,”*

awakens within us the fondest and most delightful reminiscences of our younger days, when we roamed at our own wayward will over hill and dale, meadow and woodland. We

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envy not the heart that has not one responsive chord aroused by passages like the following :

"Oh, happy birds! hid in your homes of green,  
Which sun-lit leaves and hanging boughs surround,—  
Where human cares and heartaches are not seen,  
Nor pale-faced Sorrow prostrate on the ground."

At "sweet Hawthorndale," too, the poet tells us,—

"Yet here I wooed and won my youthful bride,  
Here walked and talked when Summer days were bright."

Further on, hear how he can moralize :—

"Who seeks Contentment doth a shadow seek,—  
The shepherd's hut sleeps sweetly 'neath the moon ;  
But tend like him all day his weary sheep,  
And share his scanty meal at sultry noon,—

Then may'st thou learn how, 'mid this lovely scene,  
Brown Labour drudges for his daily bread,  
Winning that sleep, calm as the ivy green  
Which twines the thatched roof above his head.

But there are those who drink, eat, sleep, and die,—  
Slaves of the clod ! whose names are never known,  
Who bask like swine within their sensual sty,  
Till in the grave forgotten they drop down."

The author, as he tells us in the prefixed Advertisement, was the friend and *protégé* of Sir Walter Scott, whose appreciation of him strengthens the high opinion we have ever had of the acuteness of that truly great man as a critic. In addition to "Hawthorndale Revisited," the volume before us also contains a few smaller pieces,—a portion of one of which, entitled "The Woodman," we would willingly quote ; but as we have already enriched our pages with a few "pearls at random strung," from the principal poem our space will not permit us to pilfer further.

A beautiful engraving of "Hawthorndale Village" embellishes the title-page. To the honour of the age, it has already reached a *third* edition ; and in heartily thanking the author (of whose existence we knew not before we read his work) for the pleasure his musings have afforded us, we may be permitted to sincerely wish our notice of them may induce others to partake of the same intellectual banquet.

*From the Indian News, No. 80, p. 18.*

This is a miscellany of prose and verse, addressed to the gentle and the good. It will amend at the same moment the heart and the style, and will be found to invest the common circumstances of life with a poetical hue.

*From the Economist, No. 124, vol. iv., p. 39.*

To every page of this bijou, whether prose or verse, the inspiration of poetry gives vitality.

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